

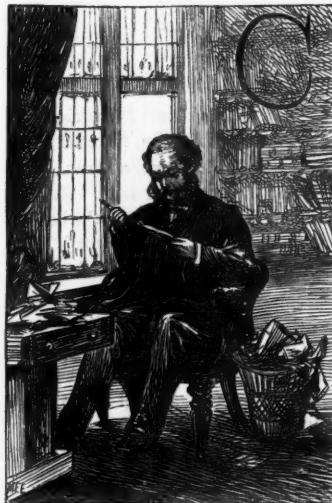
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The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER XX.

A MORNING OF PERPLEXITIES.



COLONEL BRAMLEIGH turned over and over, without breaking the seal, a letter which, bearing the post-mark of Rome and in a well-known hand, he knew came from Lady Augusta.

That second marriage of his had been a great mistake. None of the social advantages he had calculated on with such certainty had resulted from it. His wife's distinguished relatives had totally estranged themselves from her, as though she had made an unbecoming and unworthy alliance; his own sons and daughters had not concealed their animosity to their new stepmother; and, in fact, the best compromise the blunder admitted of was that they should try to see as little as possible

of each other; and as they could not obliterate the compact, they should, as far as in them lay, endeavour to ignore it.

There are no more painful aids to a memory unwilling to be taxed than a banker's half-yearly statement; and in the long record which Christmas had summoned, and which now lay open before Bramleigh's eyes, were frequent and weighty reminders of Lady Augusta's expensive ways.

He had agreed to allow her a thousand Napoleons—about eight hundred pounds—quarterly, which was, and which she owned was, a most liberal and sufficient sum to live on alone, and in a city comparatively cheap. He had, however, added, with a courtesy that the moment of parting might have suggested, “ Whenever your tastes or your comforts are found to be hampered in any way by the limits I have set down, you will do me the favour to draw directly on ‘the House,’ and I will take care that your cheques shall be attended to.”

The smile with which she thanked him was still in his memory. Since the memorable morning in Berkeley Square when she accepted his offer of marriage, he had seen nothing so fascinating—nor, let us add, so fleeting—as this gleam of enchantment. Very few days had sufficed to show him how much this meteor flash of loveliness had cost him ; and now, as he sat conning over a long line of figures, he bethought him that the second moment of witchery was very nearly as expensive as the first. When he made her that courteous offer of extending the limits of her civil list he had never contemplated how far she could have pushed his generosity, and now, to his amazement, he discovered that in a few months she had already drawn for seven thousand pounds, and had intimated to the House that the first instalment of the purchase-money of a villa would probably be required some time early in May ; the business-like character of this “ advice ” being, however, sadly disparaged by her having totally forgotten to say anything as to the amount of the impending demand.

It was in a very unlucky moment—was there ever a lucky one ?—when these heavy demands presented themselves. Colonel Bramleigh had latterly taken to what he thought, or at least meant to be, retrenchment. He was determined, as he said himself, to “ take the bull by the horns :” but the men who perform this feat usually select a very small bull. He had nibbled, as it were, at the hem of the budget ; he had cut down “ the boys ” allowances. “ What could Temple want with five hundred a year ? Her Majesty gave him four, and her Majesty certainly never intended to take his services without fitting remuneration. As to Jack having three hundred, it was downright absurdity ; it was extravagancies like these destroyed the Navy ; besides, Jack had got his promotion, and his pay ought to be something handsome.” With regard to Augustus, he only went so far as certain remonstrances about horse-keep and some hints about the iniquities of a German valet who, it was rumoured, had actually bought a house in Duke Street, St. James’s, out of his peculations in the family.

The girls were not extravagantly provided for, but for example sake he reduced their allowances by one third. Ireland was not a country for embroidered silks or Genoa velvet. It would be an admirable lesson to others if they were to see the young ladies of the great house dressed simply and unpretentiously. “ These things could only be done by people of station. Such examples must proceed from those whose motives could not be questioned.” He dismissed the head-gardener, and he was

actually contemplating the discharge of the French cook, though he well foresaw the storm of opposition so strong a measure was sure to evoke. When he came to sum up his reforms he was shocked to find that the total only reached a little over twelve hundred pounds, and this in a household of many thousands.

Was not Castello, too, a mistake? Was not all this princely style of living, in a county without a neighbourhood, totally unvisited by strangers, a capital blunder? He had often heard of the cheapness of life in Ireland; and what a myth it was! He might have lived in Norfolk for what he was spending in Downshire, and though he meant to do great things for the country, a doubt was beginning to steal over him as to how they were to be done. He had often insisted that absenteeism was the bane of Ireland, and yet for the life of him he could not see how his residence there was to prove a blessing.

Lady Augusta, with her separate establishment, was spending above three thousand a year. Poor man, he was grumbling to himself over this, when that precious document from the bank arrived with the astounding news of her immense extravagance. He laid her letter down again: he had not temper to read it. It was so sure to be one of those frivolous little levities which jar so painfully on serious feelings. He knew so well the half jestful excuses she would make for her wastefulness, the coquettish prettinesses she would deploy in describing her daily life of mock simplicity, and utter recklessness as to cost, that he muttered "Not now" to himself as he pushed the letter away. As he did so he discovered a letter in the hand of Mr. Sedley, his law agent. He had himself written a short note to that gentleman, at Jack's request; for Jack—who, like all sailors, believed in a First Lord and implicitly felt that no promotion ever came rightfully—wanted a special introduction to the great men at Somerset House, a service which Sedley, who knew every one, could easily render him. This note of Sedley's then doubtless referred to that matter, and though Bramleigh did not feel any great or warm interest in the question, he broke the envelope to read it rather as a relief than otherwise. It was at least a new topic, and it could not be a very exciting one. The letter ran thus:—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Tuesday, January 15.

"HICKLAY will speak to the First Lord at the earliest convenient moment, but as Captain Bramleigh has just got his promotion, he does not see what can be done in addition. I do not suppose your son would like a dockyard appointment, but a tolerably snug berth will soon be vacant at Malta, and as Captain B. will be in town to-morrow, I shall wait upon him early, and learn his wishes in the matter. There is great talk to-day of changes in the Cabinet, and some rumour of a dissolution. These reports and disquieting news from France have brought the Funds down one-sixth. Burrows and Black have failed—the Calcutta house had made some large tea speculation, it is said, without the knowledge of the

partners here. At all events, the liabilities will exceed a million ; available assets not a hundred thousand. I hope you will not suffer, or if so, to only a trifling extent, as I know you lately declined the advances Black so pressed upon you."

"He's right there," muttered Bramleigh. "I wouldn't touch those indigo bonds. When old Grant began to back up the natives, I saw what would become of the planters. All meddling with the labour market in India is mere gambling, and whenever a man makes his coup he ought to go off with his money. What's all this here," muttered he, "about Talookdars and Ryots? He ought to know this question cannot interest me."

"I met Kelson yesterday ; he was very close and guarded, but my impression is that they are doing nothing in the affair of the 'Pretender.' I hinted jocularly something about having a few thousands by me if he should happen to know of a good investment, and, in the same careless way, he replied, 'I'll drop in some morning at the office, and have a talk with you.' There was a significance in his manner that gave me to believe he meant a 'transaction.' We shall see. I shall add a few lines to this after I have seen Captain B. to-morrow. I must now hurry off to Westminster."

Bramleigh turned over, and read the following :—

Wednesday, 16th.

"On going to the 'Drummond' this morning to breakfast, by appointment, with your son, I found him dressing, but talking with the occupant of a room on the opposite side of the sitting-room, where breakfast was laid for three. Captain B., who seemed in excellent health and spirits, entered freely on the subject of the shore appointment, and when I suggested caution in discussing it, told me there was no need of reserve, that he could say what he pleased before his friend—'whom, by the way,' said he, 'I am anxious to make known to you. You are the very man to give him first-rate advice, and if you cannot take up his case yourself, to recommend him to some one of trust and character.' While we were talking, the stranger entered—a young man, short, good-looking, and of good address. 'I want to present you to Mr. Sedley,' said Captain B., 'and I'll be shot if I don't forget your name.'

"'I half doubt if you ever knew it,' said the other, laughing ; and, turning to me, added, 'Our friendship is of short date. We met as travellers, but I have seen enough of life to know that the instinct that draws men towards each other is no bad guarantee for mutual liking.' He said this with a slightly foreign accent, but fluently and easily.

"We now sat down to table, and though not being gifted with that expansiveness that the stranger spoke of, I soon found myself listening with pleasure to the conversation of a very shrewd and witty man, who had seen a good deal of life. Perhaps I may have exhibited some trait of the pleasure he afforded me—perhaps I may have expressed it in words ;

at all events your son marked the effect produced upon me, and in a tone of half jocular triumph, cried out, 'Eh, Sedley, you'll stand by him—won't you? I've told him if there was a man in England to carry him through a stiff campaign you were the fellow.' I replied by some commonplace, and rose soon after to proceed to Court. As the foreigner had also some business at the Hall, I offered him a seat in my cab. As we went along, he spoke freely of himself and his former life, and gave me his card, with the name 'Anatole Pracontal.' So that here I was for two hours in close confab with the enemy, to whom I was actually presented by your own son! So overwhelming was this announcement that I really felt unable to take any course, and doubted whether I ought not at once to have told him who his fellow-traveller was. I decided at last for the more cautious line, and asked him to come and see me at Fulham. We parted excellent friends. Whether he will keep his appointment or not I am unable to guess. By a special good fortune—so I certainly must deem it—Captain Bramleigh was telegraphed for to Portsmouth, and had to leave town at once. So that any risks from that quarter are avoided. Whether this strange meeting will turn out well or ill, whether it will be misinterpreted by Kelson when he comes to hear it—for it would be hard to believe it all accident—and induce him to treat us with distrust and suspicion, or whether it may conduce to a speedy settlement of everything, is more than I can yet say.

"I am so far favourably impressed by M. Pracontal's manner and address that I think he ought not to be one difficult to deal with. What may be his impression, however, when he learns with whom he has been talking so freely, is still doubtful to me. He cannot, it is true, mistrust your son, but he may feel grave doubts about *me*.

"I own I do not expect to see him to-morrow. Kelson will certainly advise him against such a step, nor do I yet perceive what immediate good would result from our meeting, beyond the assuring him—as I certainly should—that all that had occurred was pure chance, and that, though perfectly familiar with his name and his pretensions, I had not the vaguest suspicion of his identity till I read his card. It may be that out of this strange blunder good may come. Let us hope it. I will write to-morrow.

"Truly yours,

"M. SEDLEY."

Colonel Bramleigh re-read every line of the letter carefully; and as he laid it down with a sigh, said, "What a complication of troubles on my hands. At the very moment that I am making engagements to relieve others, I may not have the means to meet my own difficulties. Sedley was quite wrong to make any advances to this man; they are sure to be misinterpreted. Kelson will think we are afraid, and raise his terms with us accordingly." Again his eyes fell upon Lady Augusta's letter; but he had no temper now to encounter all the light gossip and frivolity it was

sure to contain. He placed it in his pocket, and set out to take a walk. He wanted to think, but he also wanted the spring and energy which come of brisk exercise. He felt his mind would work more freely when he was in motion ; and in the open air, too, he should escape from the terrible oppression of being continually confronted by himself,—which he felt he was in the solitude of his study.

“ If M. Pracontal measure us by the standard of Master Jack,” muttered he, bitterly, “ he will opine that the conflict ought not to be a tough one. What fools these sailors are when you take them off their own element ; and what a little bit of a world is the quarter-deck of a frigate ! Providence has not blessed me with brilliant sons ; that is certain. It was through Temple we have come to know Lord Culduff ; and I protest I anticipate little of either profit or pleasure from the acquaintanceship. As for Augustus, he is only so much shrewder than the others, that he is more cautious ; his selfishness is immensely preservative.” This was not, it must be owned, a flattering estimate that he made of his sons ; but he was a man to tell hard truths to himself ; and to tell them roughly and roundly too, like one who, when he had to meet a difficulty in life, would rather confront it in its boldest shape.

So essentially realistic was the man’s mind that, till he had actually under his eyes these few lines describing Pracontal’s look and manner, he had never been able to convince himself that this pretender was an actual *bona fide* creature. Up to this, the claim had been a vague menace, and no more ; a tradition that ended in a threat ! There was the whole of it ! Kelson had written to Sedley, and Sedley to Kelson. There had been a half-amicable contest, a sort of round with the gloves, in which these two crafty men appeared rather like great moralists than cunning lawyers. Had they been peace-makers by Act of Parliament, they could not have urged more strenuously the advantages of amity and kindness ; how severely they censured the contentious spirits which drove men into litigation ! and how beautifully they showed the Christian benefit of an arbitration “ under the court,” the costs to be equitably divided !

Throughout the whole drama, however, M. Pracontal had never figured as an active character of the piece ; and for all that Bramleigh could see, the machinery might work to the end, and the catastrophe be announced, not only without even producing him, but actually without his having ever existed. If from time to time he might chance to read in the public papers of a suspicious foreigner, a “ Frenchman or Italian of fashionable appearance,” having done this, that, or t’other, he would ask himself at once, “ I wonder could that be *my* man ? Is that the adventurer who wants to replace me here ? ” As time, however, rolled on, and nothing came of this claim more palpable than a dropping letter from Sedley, to say he had submitted such a point to counsel, or he thought that the enemy seemed disposed to come to terms, Bramleigh actually began to regard the whole subject as a man might the danger of a storm, which, breaking afar off, might probably waste all its fury before it reached him.

Now, however, these feelings of vague, undefined doubt were to give way to a very palpable terror. His own son had seen Pracontal, and sat at table with him. Pracontal was a good-looking, well-mannered fellow, with, doubtless, all the readiness and the aplomb of a clever foreigner; not a creature of mean appearance and poverty-struck aspect, whose very person would disparage his pretensions, but a man with the bearing of the world and the habits of society.

So sudden and so complete was this revulsion, and so positively did it depict before him an actual conflict, that he could only think of how to deal with Pracontal personally, by what steps it might be safest to approach him, and how to treat a man whose changeful fortunes must doubtless have made him expert in difficulties, and at the same time a not unlikely dupe to well-devised and well-applied flatteries.

To have invited him frankly to Castello,—to have assumed that it was a case in which a generous spirit might deal far more successfully than all the cavils and cranks of the law, was Bramleigh's first thought; but to do this with effect, he must confide the whole story of the peril to some at least of the family: and this, for many reasons, he could not stoop to. Bramleigh certainly attached no actual weight to this man's claim,—he did not in his heart believe that there was any foundation for his pretension; but Sedley had told him that there was case enough to go to a jury,—and a jury meant exposure, publicity, comment, and very unpleasant comment too, when party hatred should contribute its venom to the discussion. If, then, he shrunk from imparting this story to his sons and daughters, how long could he count on secrecy?—only till next assizes perhaps. At the first notice of trial the whole mischief would be out, and the matter be a world-wide scandal. Sedley advised a compromise, but the time was very unpropitious for this. It was downright impossible to get money at the moment. Every one was bent on "realizing," in presence of all the crashes and bankruptcies around. None would lend on the best securities, and men were selling out at ruinous loss to meet pressing engagements. For the very first time in his life, Bramleigh felt what it was to want for ready money. He had every imaginable kind of wealth. Houses and lands, stocks, shares, ships, costly deposits and mortgages—everything in short but gold: and yet it was gold alone could meet the emergency. How foolish it was of him to involve himself in Lord Culduff's difficulties at such a crisis: had he not troubles enough of his own! Would that essenced and enamelled old dandy have stained his boots to have served him? That was a very unpleasant query, which would cross his mind, and never obtain anything like a satisfactory reply. Would not his calculation probably be that Bramleigh was amply compensated for all he could do, by the honour of being thought the friend of a noble lord, so highly placed, and so much thought of in the world?

As for Lady Augusta's extravagance, it was simply insufferable. He had been most liberal to her because he would not permit that whatever might be the nature of the differences that separated them, money in any

shape should enter. There must be nothing sordid or mean in the tone of any discussion between them. She might prefer Italy to Ireland ; sunshine to rain ; a society of idle, leisure-loving, indolent, soft-voiced men, to association with sterner, severer, and more energetic natures. She might affect to think climate all essential to her ; and the society of her sister a positive necessity. All these he might submit to, but he was neither prepared to be ruined by her wastefulness, or maintain a controversy as to the sum she should spend. "If we come to figures, it must be a fight," muttered he, "and an ignoble fight too ; and it is to that we are now approaching."

"I think I can guess what is before me here," said he with a grim smile, as he tore open the letter and prepared to read it. Now, though on this occasion his guess was not exactly correct, nor did the epistle contain the graceful little nothings by which her ladyship was wont to chronicle her daily life, we forbear to give it in extenso to our readers ; first of all, because it opened with a very long and intricate explanation of motives which was no explanation at all, and then proceeded by an equally prolix narrative to announce a determination which was only to be final on approval. In two words, Lady Augusta was desirous of changing her religion ; but before becoming a Catholic, she wished to know if Colonel Bramleigh would make a full and irrevocable settlement on her of her present allowance, giving her entire power over its ultimate disposal, for she hinted that the sum might be capitalized ; the recompence for such splendid generosity being the noble consciousness of a very grand action, and his own liberty. To the latter she adverted with becoming delicacy, slyly hinting that in the church to which he belonged there might probably be no very strenuous objections made, should he desire to contract new ties, and once more re-enter the bonds of matrimony.

The expression which burst aloud from Bramleigh as he finished the letter, conveyed all that he felt on the subject.

"What outrageous effrontery ! The first part of this precious document is written by a priest, and the second by an attorney. It begins by informing me that I am a heretic, and politely asks me to add to that distinction the honour of being a beggar. What a woman ! I have done, I suppose, a great many foolish things in life, but I shall not cap them so far, I promise you, Lady Augusta, by an endowment of the Catholic Church. No, my lady, you shall give the new faith you are about to adopt the most signal proof of your sincerity, by renouncing all worldliness at the threshold ; and as the nuns cut off their silken tresses, you shall rid yourself of that wealth which we are told is such a barrier against heaven. Far be it from me," said he with a sardonic bitterness, "who have done so little for your happiness here, to peril your happiness hereafter."

"I will answer this at once," said he. "It shall not remain one post without its reply."

He arose to return to the house ; but in his pre-occupation he continued to walk till he reached the brow of the cliff from which the roof of

the curate's cottage was seen, about a mile off. The peaceful stillness of the scene, where not a leaf moved, and where the sea washed lazily along the low strand with a sweeping motion that gave no sound, calmed and soothed him. Was it not to taste the sweet sense of repose that he had quitted the busy life of cities and come to this lone sequestered spot? Was not this very moment, as he now felt it, the realization of a long-cherished desire? Had the world anything better in all its prizes, he asked himself, than the peaceful enjoyment of an unchequered existence? Shall I not try to carry out what once I had planned to myself, and live my life as I intended?

He sat down on the brow of the crag and looked out over the sea. A gentle, but not unpleasant sadness was creeping over him. It was one of those moments—every man has had them—in which the vanity of life and the frivolity of all its ambitions present themselves to the mind far more forcibly than ever they appear when urged from the pulpit. There is no pathos, no bad taste, no inflated description in the workings of reflectiveness. When we come to compute with ourselves what we have gained by our worldly successes, and to make a total of all our triumphs, we arrive at a truer insight into the nothingness of what we are contending for than we ever attain through the teaching of our professional moralists.

Colonel Bramleigh had made considerable progress along this peaceful track since he sat down there. Could he only be sure to accept the truths he had been repeating to himself without any wavering or uncertainty; could he have resolution enough to conform his life to these convictions,—throw over all ambitions, and be satisfied with mere happiness,—was this prize not within his reach? Temple and Marion, perhaps, might resist; but he was certain the others would agree with him,—while he thus pondered, he heard the low murmur of voices, apparently near him; he listened, and perceived that some persons were talking as they mounted the zigzag path which led up from the bottom of the gorge, and which had to cross and recross continually before it gained the summit. A thick hedge of laurel and arbutus fenced the path on either side so completely as to shut out all view of those who were walking along it, and who had to pass and repass quite close to where Bramleigh was sitting.

To his intense astonishment it was in French they spoke; and a certain sense of terror came over him as to what this might portend. Were these spies of the enemy, and was the mine about to be sprung beneath him? One was a female voice, a clear, distinct voice—which he thought he knew well, and oh, what inexpressible relief to his anxiety was it when he recognized it to be Julia L'Estrange's. She spoke volubly, almost flippantly, and, as it seemed to Bramleigh, in a tone of half sarcastic mockery, against which her companion appeared to protest, as he more than once repeated the word “*sérieuse*,” in a tone almost reproachful.

“If I am to be serious, my lord,” said she, in a more collected tone, “I had better get back to English. Let me tell you then, in a language which admits of little misconception, that I have forborne to treat your

lordship's proposal with gravity, partly out of respect for myself, partly out of deference to you."

"Deference to me? What do you mean? what can you mean?"

"I mean, my lord, that all the flattery of being the object of your lordship's choice could not obliterate my sense of a disparity, just as great between us in years as in condition. I was nineteen my last birthday, Lord Culduff," and she said this with a pouting air of offended dignity.

"A peeress of nineteen would be a great success at a drawing-room," said he, with a tone of pompous deliberation.

"Pray, my lord, let us quit a theme we cannot agree upon. With all your lordship's delicacy, you have not been able to conceal the vast sacrifices it has cost you to make me your present proposal. I have no such tact. I have not even the shadow of it; and I could never hope to hide what it would cost me to become grande dame."

"A proposal of marriage; an actual proposal," muttered Bramleigh, as he arose to move away. "I heard it with my own ears; and heard her refuse it, besides."

An hour later, when he mounted the steps of the chief entrance, he met Marion, who came towards him with an open letter. "This is from poor Lord Culduff," said she; "he has been stopping these last three days at the L'Estranges', and what between boredom and bad cookery he couldn't hold out any longer. He begs he may be permitted to come back here; he says, 'Put me below the salt, if you like—anywhere, only let it be beneath your roof, and within the circle of your fascinating society.' Shall I say Come, papa?"

"I suppose we must," muttered Bramleigh, sulkily, and passed on to his room.

CHAPTER XXI.

GEORGE AND JULIA.

It was after a hard day with the hounds that George L'Estrange reached the cottage to a late dinner. The hunting had not been good. They had found three times, but each time lost their fox after a short burst, and though the morning broke favourably, with a low cloudy sky and all the signs of a good scenting day, towards the afternoon a brisk north-easter had sprung up, making the air sharp and piercing, and rendering the dogs wild and uncertain. In fact, it was one of those days which occasionally irritate men more than actual "blanks;" there was a constant promise of something, always ending in disappointment. The horses, too, were fretful and impatient, as horses are wont to be with frequent checks, and when excited by a cold and cutting wind.

Even Nora, perfection that she was of temper and training, had not behaved well. She had taken her fences hotly and impatiently, and

actually chested a stiff bank, which cost herself and her rider a heavy fall, and a disgrace that the curate felt more acutely than the injury.

" You don't mean to say you fell, George ? " said Julia, with a look of positive incredulity.

" Nora did, which comes pretty much to the same thing. We were coming out of Gore's Wood, and I was leading. There's a high bank with a drop into Longworth's lawn. It's a place I've taken scores of times. One can't fly it ; you must " top," and Nora can do that sort of thing to perfection ; and as I came on I had to swerve a little to avoid some of the dogs that were climbing up the bank. Perhaps it was that irritated her, but she rushed madly on, and came full chest against the gripe, and—I don't remember much more till I found myself actually drenched with vinegar that old Catty Lalor was pouring over me, when I got up again, addled and confused enough, but I'm all right now. Do you know, Ju," said he, after a pause, " I was more annoyed by a chance remark I heard as I was lying on the grass than by the whole misadventure ? "

" What was it, George ? "

" It was old Curtis was riding by, and he cried out, ' Who's down ? ' and some one said, ' L'Estrange.' ' By Jove,' said he, ' I don't think that fellow was ever on his knees before ; ' and this because I was a parson."

" How unfeeling ; but how like him."

" Wasn't it ? After all, it comes of doing what is not exactly right. I suppose it's not enough that I see nothing wrong in a day with the hounds. I ought to think how others regard it ; whether it shocks *them*, or exposes my cloth to sarcasm or censure ? Is it not dinner-hour ? "

" Of course it is, George. It's past eight."

" And where's our illustrious guest ; has he not appeared ? "

" Lord Culduff has gone. There came a note to him from Castello in the afternoon, and about five o'clock the phaeton appeared at the door—only with the servants—and his lordship took most affectionate leave of me, charging me with the very sweetest messages for you, and assurances of eternal memory of the blissful hours he had passed here."

" Perhaps it's not the right thing to say, but I own to you I'm glad he's gone."

" But why, George ; was he not amusing ? "

" Yes ; I suppose he was ; but he was so supremely arrogant, so impressed with his own grandness and our littleness, so persistently eager to show us that we were enjoying an honour in his presence, that nothing in our lives could entitle us to, that I found my patience pushed very hard to endure it."

" I liked him. I liked his vanity and conceit ; and I wouldn't for anything he had been less pretentious."

" I have none of your humoristic temperament, Julia, and I never could derive amusement from the eccentricities or peculiarities of others."

"And there's no fun like it, George. Once that you come to look on life as a great drama, and all the men and women as players, it's the best comedy ever one sat at."

"I'm glad he's gone for another reason, too. I suppose it's shabby to say it, but it's true all the same: he was a very costly guest, and I wasn't disposed, like Charles the Bold or that other famous fellow, to sell a province to entertain an emperor."

"Had we a province to sell, George?" said she, laughing.

"No; but I had a horse, and unfortunately Nora must go to the hammer now."

"Surely not for this week's extravagance?" cried she, anxiously.

"Not exactly for this, but for everything. You know old Curtis's saying, 'It's always the last glass of wine makes a man tipsy.' But here comes the dinner, and let us turn to something pleasanter."

It was so jolly to be alone again, all restraint removed, all terror of culinary mishaps withdrawn, and all the consciousness of little domestic shortcomings obliterated, that L'Estrange's spirit rose at every moment, and at last he burst out, "I declare to you, Julia, if that man hadn't gone, I'd have died out of pure inanition. To see him day after day trying to conform to our humble fare, turning over his meat on his plate, and trying to divide with his fork the cutlet that he wouldn't condescend to cut, and barely able to suppress the shudder our little light wine gave him; to witness all this, and to feel that I mustn't seem to know, while I was fully aware of it, was a downright misery. I'd like to know what brought him here."

"I fancy he couldn't tell you himself. He paid an interminable visit, and we asked him to stop and dine with us. A wet night detained him, and when his servant came over with his dressing-bag or portmanteau, you said, or I said,—I forget which,—that he ought not to leave us without a peep at our coast scenery."

"I remember all that; but what I meant was, that his coming here from Castello was no accident. He never left a French cook and Château Lafitte for cold mutton and sour sherry without some reason for it."

"You forget, George, he was on his way to Lisconnor when he came here. He was going to visit the mines."

"By the by, that reminds me of a letter I got this evening. I put it in my pocket without reading. Isn't that Vickars' hand?"

"Yes; it is his reply, perhaps, to my letter. He is too correct and too prudent to write to myself, and sends the answer to you."

"As our distinguished guest is not here to be shocked, Julia, let us hear what Vickars says."

"My dear Mr. L'Estrange, I have before me a letter from your sister, expressing a wish that I should consent to the withdrawal of the sum of two thousand pounds, now vested in consols under my trusteeship, and employ these monies in a certain enterprise which she designates as the coal mines of Lisconnor. Before acceding to the grave responsibility

which this change of investment would impose upon me, even supposing that the 'Master,'—who is the Master, George?"

"Go on ; read further," said he, curtly.

"—that the Master would concur with such a procedure, I am desirous of hearing what you yourself know of the speculation in question. Have you seen and conversed with the engineers who have made the surveys ? Have you heard from competent and unconcerned parties——?" Oh, George, it's so like the way he talks. I can't read on."

L'Estrange took the letter from her and glanced rapidly over the lines, and then turning to the last page read aloud. "How will the recommendation of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners affect you touching the union of Portshannon with Kilmullock ? Do they simply extinguish you, or have you a claim for compensation ?"

"What does he mean, George ?" cried she, as she gazed at the pale face and agitated expression of her brother as he laid down the letter before her.

"It is just extinguishment ; that's the word for it," muttered he. "When they unite the parishes, they suppress me."

"Oh, George, don't say that ; it has not surely come to this ?"

"There's no help for it," said he, putting away his glass and leaning his head on his hand. "I was often told they'd do something like this ; and when Grimsby was here to examine the books and make notes,—you remember it was a wet Sunday, and nobody came but the clerk's mother,—he said, as we left the church, 'The congregation is orderly and attentive, but not numerous.'"

"I told you, George, I detested that man. I said at the time he was no friend to you."

"If he felt it his duty——"

"Duty, indeed ! I never heard of a cruelty yet that hadn't the plea of a duty. I'm sure Captain Craufurd comes to church, and Mrs. Bayley comes, and as to the Great House, there's a family there of not less than thirty persons."

"When Grimsby was here Castello was not occupied."

"Well, it is occupied now ; and if Colonel Bramleigh be a person of the influence he assumes to be, and if he cares,—as I take it he must care,—not to live like a heathen, he'll prevent this cruel wrong. I'm not sure that Nelly has much weight, but she would do anything in the world for us, and I think Augustus, too, would befriend us."

"What can they all do ? It's a question for the Commissioners."

"So it may ; but I take it the Commissioners are human beings."

He turned again to the letter which lay open on the table, and read aloud, "They want a chaplain, I see, at Albano, near Rome. Do you know any one who could assist you to the appointment, always providing that you would like it ?" I should think I would like it."

"You were thinking of the glorious riding over the Campagna, George, that you told me about long ago ?"

"I hope not," said he, blushing deeply, and looking overwhelmed with confusion.

"Well, I was, George. Albano reminded me at once of those long moonlight canters you told me about, with the grand old city in the distance. I almost fancy I have seen it all. Let us bethink us of the great people we know, and who would aid us in the matter."

"The list begins and ends with the Lord Culduff I suspect."

"Not at all. It is the Bramleighs can be of use here. Lady Augusta lives at Rome; she must be, I'm sure, a person of influence there, and be well known to, and know all the English of station. It's a downright piece of good fortune for us she should be there. There now, be of good heart, and don't look wretched. We'll drive over to Castello to-morrow."

"They've been very cool towards us of late."

"As much our fault as theirs, George; some, certainly, was my own."

"Oh, Vickars has heard of her. He says here, 'Is the Lady Augusta Bramleigh, who has a villa at Albano, any relative of your neighbour Colonel Bramleigh? She is very eccentric, some say mad: but she does what she likes with every one. Try and procure a letter to her.'"

"It's all as well as settled, George. We'll be cantering over that swelling prairie before the spring ends," said she. Quietly rising and going over to the piano, she began one of those little popular Italian ballads which they call "Stornelli"—those light effusions of national life which blend up love and flowers and sunshine together so pleasantly, and seem to emblemize the people who sing them.

"Thither! oh, thither! George! as the girl sings in Goethe's ballad. Won't it be delightful?"

"First let us see if it be possible."

And then they began one of those discussions of ways and means which, however, as we grow old in life, are tinged with all the hard and stern characters of sordid self-interest, are, in our younger days, blended so thoroughly with hope and trustfulness that they are amongst the most attractive of all the themes we can turn to. There were so many things to be done, and so little to do them with, that it was marvellous to hear of the cunning and ingenious devices by which poverty was to be cheated out of its meanness and actually imagine itself picturesque. George was not a very imaginative creature, but it was strange to see to what flights he rose as the sportive fancy of the high-spirited girl carried him away to the region of the speculative and the hopeful.

"It's just as well, after all, perhaps," said he, after some moments of thought, "that we had not invested your money in the mine."

"Of course, George, we shall want it to buy vines and orange-trees. Oh, I shall grow mad with impatience if I talk of this much longer! Do you know," said she, in a more collected and serious tone, "I have just built a little villa on the lake-side of Albano? And I'm doubting whether I'll have my 'pergolato' of vines next the water or facing the mountain. I incline to the mountain."

"We mustn't dream of building," said he, gravely.

"We must dream of everything, George. It is in dreamland I am going to live. Why is this gift of fancy bestowed upon us if not to conjure up allies that will help us to fight the stern evils of life? Without imagination, Hope is a poor, weary, plodding, foot-traveller, painfully lagging behind us. Give him but speculation, and he soars aloft on wings and rises towards heaven."

"Do be reasonable, Julia; and let us decide what steps we shall take."

"Let me just finish my boathouse: I'm putting an aviary on the top of it. Well, don't look so pitifully; I am not going mad. Now, then, for the practical. We are to go over to Castello to-morrow early, I suppose?"

"Yes; I should say in the morning, before Colonel Bramleigh goes into his study. After that he dislikes being disturbed. I mean to speak to him myself. You must address yourself to Marion."

"The forlorn hope always falls to my share," said she, poutingly. "Why, you were the best friends in the world till a few days back! You men can understand nothing of these things. You neither know the nice conditions nor the delicate reserves of young lady friendships; nor have you the slightest conception of how boundless we can be in admiration of each other in the imagined consciousness of something very superior in ourselves, and which makes all our love a very generous impulse. There is so much coarseness in male friendships, that you understand none of these subtle distinctions."

"I was going to say, thank Heaven, we don't."

"You are grateful for very little, George. I assure you there is a great charm in these fine affinities, and remember you men are not necessarily always rivals. Your roads in life are so numerous and so varied, that you need not jostle. We women have but one path, and one goal at the end of it; and there is no small generosity in the kindness we extend to each other."

They talked away late into the night of the future. Once or twice the thought flashed across Julia whether she ought not to tell of what had passed between Lord Culduff and herself. She was not quite sure but that George ought to hear it; but then a sense of delicacy restrained her—a delicacy that extended to that old man who had made her the offer of his hand, and who would not for worlds have it known that his offer had been rejected. No, thought she, his secret shall be respected. As he deemed me worthy to be his wife, he shall know that so far as regards respect for his feelings he had not over-estimated me.

It was all essential, however, that her brother should not think of enlisting Lord Culduff in his cause, or asking his lordship's aid or influence in any way; and when L'Estrange carelessly said, "Could not our distinguished friend and guest be of use here?" she hastened to reply, "Do not think of that, George. These men are so victimized by appeals of this sort that they either flatly refuse their assistance, or give some flippant

promise of an aid they never think of according. It would actually fret me, if I thought we were to owe anything to such intervention. In fact," said she, laughingly, "it's quite an honour to be his acquaintance. It would be something very like a humiliation to have him for a friend. And now good-night. You won't believe it, perhaps; but it wants but a few minutes to two o'clock."

"People, I believe, never go to bed in Italy," said he, yawning; "or only in the day-time. So that we are in training already, Julia."

"How I hope the match may come off," said she, as she gave him her hand at parting. "I'll go and dream over it."

CHAPTER XXII.

IN THE LIBRARY AT CASTELLO.

WHEN L'Estrange and his sister arrived at Castello on the morning after the scene of our last chapter, it was to discover that the family had gone off early to visit the mine of Lisconnor, where they were to dine, and not return till late in the evening.

Colonel Bramleigh alone remained behind: a number of important letters which had come by that morning's post detained him; but he had pledged himself to follow the party, and join them at dinner, if he could finish his correspondence in time.

George and Julia turned away from the door, and were slowly retracing their road homeward, when a servant came running after them to say that Colonel Bramleigh begged Mr. L'Estrange would come back for a moment; that he had something of consequence to say to him.

"I'll stroll about the shrubberies, George, till you join me," said Julia. "Who knows it may not be a farewell look I may be taking of these dear old scenes." George nodded, half mournfully, and followed the servant towards the library.

In his ordinary and every-day look, no man ever seemed a more perfect representative of worldly success and prosperity than Colonel Bramleigh. He was personally what would be called handsome, had a high bold forehead, and large grey eyes, well set and shaded by strong full eyebrows, so regular in outline and so correctly defined as to give a half suspicion that art had been called to the assistance of nature. He was ruddy and fresh-looking, with an erect carriage, and that air of general confidence that seemed to declare he knew himself to be a favourite of fortune and gloried in the distinction.

"I can do scores of things others must not venture upon," was a common saying of his. "I can trust to my luck," was almost a maxim with him. And in reality, if the boast was somewhat vainglorious, it was not without foundation; a marvellous, almost unerring, success attended him through life. Enterprises that were menaced with

rain and bankruptcy would rally from the hour that he joined them, and schemes of fortune that men deemed half desperate would, under his guidance, grow into safe and profitable speculations. Others might equal him in intelligence, in skill, in ready resource and sudden expedient, but he had not one to rival him in luck. It is strange enough that the hard business mind, the men of realism *par excellence*, can recognize such a thing as fortune ; but so it is, there are none so prone to believe in this quality as the people of finance. The spirit of the gambler is, in fact, the spirit of commercial enterprise, and the "odds" are as carefully calculated in the counting-house as in the betting-ring. Seen as he came into the breakfast-room of a morning, with the fresh flush of exercise on his cheek, or as he appeared in the drawing-room before dinner, with that air of ease and enjoyment that marked all his courtesy, one would have said, "There is one certainly with whom the world goes well." There were caustic, invidious people, who hinted that Bramleigh deserved but little credit for that happy equanimity and that buoyant spirit which sustained him ; they said, "He has never had a reverse, wait till he be tried :" and the world had waited and waited, and to all seeming the eventful hour had not come, for there he was, a little balder perhaps, a stray grey hair in his whiskers, and somewhat portlier in his presence, but, on the whole, pretty much what men had known him to be for fifteen or twenty years back.

Upon none did the well-to-do, blooming, and prosperous rich man produce a more powerful impression than on the young curate, who, young, vigorous, handsome as he was, could yet never sufficiently emerge from the res angustie domi to feel the ease and confidence that come of affluence.

What a shock was it then to L'Estrange, as he entered the library, to see the man whom he had ever beheld as the type of all that was happy and healthful and prosperous, haggard and careworn, his hand tremulous, and his manner abrupt and uncertain, with a certain furtive dread at moments, followed by outbursts of passionate defiance, as though he were addressing himself to others besides him who was then before him.

Though on terms of cordial intimacy with the curate, and always accustomed to call him by his name, he received him as he entered the room with a cold and formal politeness, apologized for having taken the liberty to send after and recall him, and ceremoniously requested him to be seated.

"We were sorry you and Miss L'Estrange could not join the picnic to-day," said Bramleigh ; "though to be sure it is scarcely the season yet for such diversions."

L'Estrange felt the awkwardness of saying that they had not been invited, and muttered something not very intelligible about the uncertainty of the weather.

"I meant to have gone over myself," said Bramleigh, hurriedly ; "but all these," and he swept his hand as he spoke through a mass of letters on the table, "all these have come since morning, and I am not half through them yet. What's that the moralist says about calling no

man happy till he dies? I often think one cannot speculate upon a pleasant day till after the post-hour."

"I know very little of either the pains or pleasures of the letter-bag. I have almost no correspondence."

"How I envy you!" cried he, fervently.

"I don't imagine that mine is a lot many would be found to envy," said L'Estrange, with a gentle smile.

"The old story, of course. 'Qui fit Maeenas, ut Nemo,'—I forget my Horace,—'ut Nemo; ' how does it go?".

"Yes, sir. But I never said I was discontented with my lot in life. I only remarked that I didn't think that others would envy it."

"I have it,—I have it," continued Bramleigh, following out his own train of thought; "I have it. 'Ut Nemo, quam sibi sortem sit contentus.' It's a matter of thirty odd years since I saw that passage, L'Estrange, and I can't imagine what could have brought it so forcibly before me to-day."

"Certainly it could not have been any application to yourself," said the curate, politely.

"How do you mean, sir?" cried Bramleigh, almost fiercely. "How do you mean?"

"I mean, sir, that few men have less cause for discontent with fortune?"

"How can *you*,—how can any man, presume to say that of another!" said Bramleigh, in a loud and defiant tone, as he arose and paced the room. "Who can tell what passes in his neighbour's house, still less in his heart or his head? What do I know, as I listen to your discourse on a Sunday, of the terrible conflict of doubts that have beset you during the week,—heresies that have swarmed around you like the vipers and hideous reptiles that gathered around St. Anthony, and that, banished in one-shape, came back in another? How do I know what compromises you may have made with your conscience before you come to utter to me your eternal truths; and how you may have said, 'If he can believe all this, so much the better for him,'—eh?"

He turned fiercely round, as if to demand an answer, and the curate modestly said, "I hope it is not so that men preach the gospel."

"And yet many must preach in that fashion," said Bramleigh, with a deep but subdued earnestness. "I take it that no man's convictions are without a flaw somewhere, and it is not by parading that flaw he will make converts."

L'Estrange did not feel disposed to follow him into this thesis, and sat silent and motionless.

"I suppose," muttered Bramleigh, as he folded his arms and walked the room with slow steps, "it's all expediency,—all! We do the best we can, and hope it may be enough. You are a good man, L'Estrange——"

"Far from it, sir. I feel, and feel very bitterly too, my own unworthiness," said the curate, with an intense sincerity of voice.

"I think you so far good that you are not worldly. You would not do

a mean thing, an ignoble, a dishonest thing; you wouldn't take what was not your own, nor defraud another of what was his,—would you?"

"Perhaps not; I hope not."

"And yet that is saying a great deal. I may have my doubts whether that penknife be mine or not. Some one may come to-morrow or next day to claim it as his, and describe it, Heaven knows how rightly or wrongly. No matter, he'll say he owns it. Would you, sir,—I ask you now simply as a Christian man, I am not speaking to a casuist or a lawyer,—would you, sir, at once, just as a measure of peace to your own conscience, say, 'Let him take it,' rather than burden your heart with a discussion for which you had no temper nor taste? That's the question I'd like to ask you. Can you answer it? I see you cannot," cried he, rapidly. "I see at once how you want to go off into a thousand subtleties, and instead of resolving my one doubt, surround me with a legion of others."

"If I know anything about myself I'm not much of a casuist; I haven't the brains for it," said L'Estrange, with a sad smile.

"Ay, there it is. That's the humility of Satan's own making; that's the humility that exclaims, 'I'm only honest. I'm no genius. Heaven has not made me great or gifted. I'm simply a poor creature, right-minded and pure-hearted.' As if there was anything,—as if there could be anything so exalted as this same purity."

"But I never said that; I never presumed to say so," said the other, modestly.

"And if you rail against riches, and tell me that wealth is a snare and a pitfall, what do you mean by telling me that my reverse of fortune is a chastisement? Why, sir, by your own theory it ought to be a blessing, a positive blessing; so that if I were turned out of this princely house to-morrow, branded as a pretender and an impostor, I should go forth better, —not only better, but happier. Ay, that's the point; happier than I ever was as the lord of these broad acres!" As he spoke he tore his cravat from his throat, as though it were strangling him by its pressure, and now walked the room, carrying the neckcloth in his hand, while the veins in his throat stood out full and swollen like a tangled cordage.

L'Estrange was so much frightened by the wild voice and wilder gesture of the man, that he could not utter a word in reply.

Bramleigh now came over, and leaning his hand on the other's shoulder, in a tone of kind and gentle meaning, said,—

"It is not your fault, my dear friend, that you are illogical and unreasonable. You are obliged to defend a thesis you do not understand, by arguments you cannot measure. The armoury of the Church has not a weapon that has not figured in the middle ages; and what are you to do with halberds and cross-bows in a time of rifles and revolvers! If a man, like myself, burdened with a heavy weight on his heart, had gone to his confessor in olden times, he would probably have heard, if not words of comfort, something to enlighten, to instruct, and to guide him. Now what can you give me? tell me that? I want to hear by what subtleties the

Church can reconcile me not to do what I ought to do, and yet not quarrel with my own conscience. Can you help me to that?"

L'Estrange shook his head in dissent.

"I suppose it is out of some such troubles as mine that men come to change their religion." He paused; and then bursting into a laugh, said,—"You hear that the other bank deals more liberally—asks a smaller commission, and gives you a handsomer interest—and you accordingly transfer your account. I believe that's the whole of it."

"I will not say you have stated the case fairly," said L'Estrange; but so faintly as to show that he was far from eager to continue the discussion, and he arose to take his leave.

"You are going already? and I have not spoken to you one word about—what was it? Can you remember what it was?—something that related personally to yourself?"

"Perhaps I can guess, sir. It was the mine at Lisconnor, probably? You were kind enough the other day to arrange my securing some shares in the undertaking. Since that, however, I have heard a piece of news which may affect my whole future career. There has been some report made by the Commissioner about the parish."

"That's it, that's it. They're going to send you off, L'Estrange. They're going to draft you to a cathedral, and make a prebendary of you. You are to be on the staff of an archbishop: a sort of Christian unattached. Do you like the prospect?"

"Not at all, sir. To begin, I am a very poor man, and could ill bear the cost of life this might entail."

"Your sister would probably be pleased with the change; a gayer place, more life, more movement."

"I suspect my sister reconciles herself to dulness even better than myself."

"Girls do that occasionally; patience is a female virtue."

There was a slight pause; and now L'Estrange, drawing a long breath as if preparing himself for a great effort, said,—

"It was to speak to you, sir, about that very matter, and to ask your assistance, that I came up here this day."

"I wish I were a bishop, for your sake, my dear friend."

"I know well, sir, I can count upon your kind interest in me, and I believe that an opportunity now offers—"

"What is it? where is it?"

"At Rome, sir; or rather near Rome, a place called Albano. They want a chaplain there."

"But you're not a Catholic priest, L'Estrange."

"No, sir. It is an English community that wants a parson."

"I see; and you think this would suit you?"

"There are some great attractions about it; the country, the climate, and the sort of life, all have a certain fascination for me, and Julia is most eager about it."

"The young lady has ambition," muttered Bramleigh to himself. "But what can *I* do, L'Estrange? I don't own a rood of land at Albano. I haven't a villa—not even a fig-tree there. I could subscribe to the church fund, if there be such a thing; I could qualify for the franchise, and give you a vote, if that would be of service."

"You could do better, sir. You could give me a letter to Lady Augusta, whose influence, I believe, is all powerful."

For a moment Bramleigh stared at him fixedly, and then sinking slowly into a chair, he leaned his head on his hand, and seemed lost in thought. The name of Lady Augusta had brought up before him a long train of events and possible consequences, which soon led him far away from the parson and all his cares. From her debts, her extravagances, her change of religion, and her suggestion of separation, he went back to his marriage with her, and even to his first meeting. Strange chain of disasters from beginning to end. A bad investment in every way. It paid nothing. It led to nothing.

"I hope, sir," said L'Estrange, as he gazed at the strange expression of preoccupation in the other's face—"I hope, sir, I have not been indiscreet in my request?"

"What *was* your request?" asked Colonel Bramleigh bluntly, and with a look of almost sternness.

"I had asked you, sir, for a letter to Lady Augusta," said the curate, half offended at the manner of the last question.

"A letter to Lady Augusta?" repeated Bramleigh, dwelling on each word, as though by the effort he could recall to his mind something that had escaped him.

"I mean, sir, with reference to this appointment,—the chaplaincy," interposed L'Estrange, for he was offended at the hesitation, which he thought implied reluctance or disinclination on Colonel Bramleigh's part, and he hastened to show that it was not any claim he was preferring to her ladyship's acquaintance, but simply his desire to obtain her interest in his behalf.

"Influence! influence!" repeated Bramleigh to himself. "I have no doubt she has influence, such persons generally have. It is one of the baits that catch them! This little glimpse of power has a marvellous attraction—and these churchmen know so well how to display all their seductive arts before the eager eyes of the newly won convert. Yes, I am sure you are right, sir; Lady Augusta is one most likely to have influence,—you shall have the letter you wish for. I do not say I will write it to-day, for I have a heavy press of correspondence before me, but if you will come up to-morrow, by luncheon time, or to dinner,—why not dine here?"

"I think I'd rather come up early, sir."

"Well, then, early be it. I'll have the letter for you. I wish I could remember something I know I had to say to you. What was it? What was it? Nothing of much consequence, perhaps, but still I feel as if—eh, —don't you feel so too?"

"I have not the slightest clue, sir, to what you mean."

"It wasn't about the mine—no. I think you see your way *there* clearly enough. It may be a good thing, or it may not. Cutbill is like the rest of them, not a greater rogue perhaps, nor need he be. They *are* such shrewd fellows, and as the money is your sister's,—trust money, too,—I declare I'd be cautious."

L'Estrange mumbled some words of assent; he saw that Bramleigh's manner betokened exhaustion and weariness, and he was eager to be gone. "Till to-morrow, then, sir," said he, moving to the door.

"You'll not dine with us? I think you might though," muttered Bramleigh, half to himself. "I'm sure Culduff would make no show of awkwardness, nor would your sister either,—women never do. But do just what you like; my head is aching so, I believe I must lie down for an hour or two. Do you pass Belton's?"

"I could without any inconvenience; do you want him?"

"I fancy I'd do well to see him; he said something of cupping me the last day he was here,—would you mind telling him to give me a call?"

"May I come up in the evening, sir, and see how you are?"

"In the evening? this evening?" cried Bramleigh, in a harsh discordant voice. "Why, good heavens, sir! have a little, a very little discretion. You have been here since eleven; I marked the clock. It was not full five minutes after eleven, when you came in,—it's now past one. Two mortal hours,—and you ask me if you may return this evening; and I reply, sir, distinctly—No! Is that intelligible? I say—No!" As he spoke he turned away, and the curate, covered with shame and confusion, hastened out of the room, and down the stairs, and out into the open air, dreading lest he should meet any one, and actually terrified at the thought of being seen. He plunged into the thickest of the shrubberies, and it was with a sense of relief he heard from a child that his sister had gone home some time before, and left word for him to follow her."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CURATE CROSS-EXAMINED.

WHEN the party returned from the picnic, it was to find Colonel Bramleigh very ill. Some sort of fit the doctor called it—not apoplexy nor epilepsy, but something that seemed to combine features of both. It had, he thought, been produced by a shock of some sort, and L'Estrange, who had last been with him before his seizure, was summoned to impart the condition in which he had found him, and whatever might serve to throw light on the attack.

If the curate was nervous and excited by the tidings that reached him of the colonel's state, the examination to which he was submitted served little to restore calm to his system. Question after question poured in.

Sometimes two or three would speak together, and all—except Ellen—accosted him in a tone that seemed half to make him chargeable with the whole calamity. When asked to tell of what they had been conversing, and that he mentioned how Colonel Bramleigh had adverted to matters of faith and belief, Marion, in a whisper loud enough to be overheard, exclaimed, “I was sure of it. It was one of those priestly indiscretions; he would come talking to papa about what he calls his soul's health, and in this way brought on the excitement.”

“Did you not perceive, sir,” asked she, fiercely, “that the topic was too much for his nerves? Did it not occur to you that the moment was inopportune for a very exciting subject?”

“Was his manner easy and natural when you saw him first?” asked Augustus.

“Had he been reading that debate on Servia?” inquired Temple.

“Matter enough there, by Jove, to send the blood to a man's head,” cried Culduff, warmly.

“I'm convinced it was all religious,” chimed in Marion, who triumphed mercilessly over the poor parson's confusion. “It is what they call ‘in season and out of season’; and they are true to their device, for no men on earth more heartily defy the dictates of tact or delicacy.”

“Oh, Marion, what are you saying?” whispered Nelly.

“It's no time for honied words, Ellen, in the presence of a heavy calamity, but I'd like to ask Mr. L'Estrange why, when he saw the danger of the theme they were discussing, he did not try to change the topic.”

“So I did. I led him to talk of myself and my interests.”

“An admirable antidote to excitement, certainly,” muttered Culduff to Temple, who seemed to relish the joke intensely.

“You say that my father had been reading his letters—did he appear to have received any tidings to call for unusual anxiety?” asked Augustus.

“I found him—as I thought—looking very ill, careworn almost, when I entered. He had been writing, and seemed fatigued and exhausted. His first remark to me was, I remember, a mistake.” L'Estrange here stopped suddenly. He did not desire to repeat the speech about being invited to the picnic. It would have been an awkwardness on all sides.

“What do you call a mistake, sir?” asked Marion, calmly.

“I mean he asked me something which a clearer memory would have reminded him not to have inquired after.”

“This grows interesting. Perhaps you will enlighten us a little farther, and say what the blunder was.”

“Well, he asked me how it happened that Julia and myself were not of the picnic, forgetting of course that we—we had not heard of it.” A deep flush was now spread over his face and forehead, and he looked overwhelmed with shame.

“I see it all; I see the whole thing,” said Marion, triumphantly. “It was out of the worldliness of the picnic sprung all the saintly conversation that ensued.”

"No; the transition was more gradual," said L'Estrange, smiling, for he was at last amused at the asperity of this cross-examination. "Nor was there what you call any saintly conversation at all. A few remarks Colonel Bramleigh indeed made on the insufficiency of, not the church, but churchmen, to resolve doubts and difficulties."

"I heartily agree with him," broke in Lord Culduff, with a smile of much intended significance.

"And is it possible; are we to believe that all papa's attack was brought on by a talk over a picnic?" asked Marion.

"I think I told you that he received many letters by the post, and to some of them he adverted as being very important and requiring immediate attention. One that came from Rome appeared to cause him much excitement."

Marion turned away her head with an impatient toss, as though she certainly was not going to accept this explanation as sufficient.

"I shall want a few minutes with Mr. L'Estrange alone in the library, if I may be permitted," said the doctor, who had now entered the room after his visit to the sick man.

"I hope you may be more successful than we have been," whispered Marion as she sailed out of the room, followed by Lord Culduff; and after a few words with Augustus, the doctor and L'Estrange retired to confer in the library.

"Don't flurry me; take me quietly, doctor," said the curate, with a piteous smile. "They've given me such a burster over the deep ground that I'm completely blown. Do you know," added he, seriously, "they've cross-questioned me in a way that would imply that I am the cause of this sudden seizure."

"No, no; they couldn't mean that."

"There's no excuse then for the things Miss Bramleigh said to me."

"Remember what an anxious moment it is; people don't measure their expressions when they are frightened. When they left him in the morning he was in his usual health and spirits, and they come back to find him very ill—dangerously ill. That alone would serve to palliate any unusual show of eagerness. Tell me now, was he looking perfectly himself, was he in his ordinary spirits, when you met him?"

"No; I thought him depressed, and at times irritable."

"I see; he was hasty and abrupt. He did not brook contradiction, perhaps?"

"I never went that far. If I dissented once or twice, I did so mildly and even doubtingly."

"Which made him more exacting, and more intolerant, you would say?"

"Possibly it did. I remember he rated me rather sharply for not being contented with a very humble condition in life, though I assured him I felt no impatience at my lowly state and was quite satisfied to wait till better should befall me. He called me a casuist for saying this, and hinted that all churchmen had the leaven of the Jesuit in them;

but he got out of this after a while, and promised to write a letter in my behalf."

"And which he told me you would find sealed and addressed on this table here. Here it is."

"How kind of him to remember me through all his suffering."

"He said something about it being the only reparation he could make you, but his voice was not very clear or distinct, and I couldn't be sure I caught his words correctly."

"Reparation! he owed me none."

"Well, well, it is possible I may have mistaken him. One thing is plain enough: you cannot give me any clue to this seizure beyond the guess that it may have been some tidings he received by post."

L'Estrange shook his head in silence, and after a moment said, "Is the attack serious?"

"Highly so."

"And is his life in danger?"

"A few hours will decide that, but it may be days before we shall know if his mind will recover. Craythorpe has been sent for from Dublin, and we shall have his opinion this evening. I have no hesitation in saying that mine is unfavourable."

"What a dreadful thing, and how fearfully sudden. I cannot conceive how he could have bethought him of the letter for me at such a moment."

"He wrote it, he said, as you left him; you had not quitted the house when he began. He said to me, 'I saw I was growing worse, I felt my confusion was gaining on me, and a strange co-mixture of people and events was occurring in my head; so I swept all my letters and papers into a drawer and locked it, wrote the few lines I had promised, and with my almost last effort of consciousness rang the bell for my servant.'

"But he was quite collected when he told you this?"

"Yes, it was in one of those lucid intervals when the mind shines out clear and brilliant; but the effort cost him dearly: he has not rallied from it since."

"Has he over-worked himself; is this the effect of an over-exerted brain?"

"I'd call it rather the result of some wounded sensibility; he appears to have suffered some great reverse in ambition or in fortune. His tone, so far as I can fathom it, implies intense depression. After all, we must say he met much coldness here: the people did not visit him, there was no courtesy, no kindness, shown him; and though he seemed indifferent to it, who knows how he may have felt it?"

"I do not suspect he gave any encouragement to intimacy; he seemed to me as if declining acquaintance with the neighbourhood."

"Ay; but it was in resentment, I opine; but *you* ought to know best. You were constantly here?"

"Yes, very frequently; but I am not an observant person; all the little details which convey a whole narrative to others are utterly lost upon *me*."

The doctor smiled. It was an expression that appeared to say he concurred in the curate's version of his own nature.

"It is these small gifts of combining, arranging, sifting, and testing, that we doctors have to cultivate," said he, as he took his hat. "The patient the most eager to be exact and truthful will, in spite of himself, mislead and misguide us. There is a strange bend sinister in human nature, against sincerity, that will indulge itself even at the cost of life itself. You are the physician of the soul, sir; but take my word for it, you might get many a shrewd hint and many a useful suggestion from us, the meaner workmen, who only deal with nerves and arteries."

As he wended his solitary road homewards, L'Estrange pondered thoughtfully over the doctor's words. He had no need, he well knew, to be reminded of his ignorance of mankind; but here was a new view of it, and it seemed immeasurable.

On the whole he was a sadder man than usual on that day. The world around him, that narrow circle whose diameter was perhaps a dozen miles or so, was very sombre in its colouring. He had left sickness and sorrow in a house where he had hitherto only seen festivity and pleasure; and worse again as regarded himself, he had carried away none of those kindlier sympathies and friendly feelings which were wont to greet him at the great house. Were they really then changed to him? and if so, why so? There is a moral chill in the sense of estrangement from those we have lived with on terms of friendship that, like the shudder that precedes ague, seems to threaten that worse will follow. Julia would see where the mischief lay had she been in his place. Julia would have read the mystery, if there were a mystery, from end to end; but *he*, he felt it, he had no powers of observation, no quickness, no tact; he saw nothing that lay beneath the surface, nor, indeed, much that was on the surface. All that he knew was, that at the moment when his future was more uncertain than ever, he found himself more isolated and friendless than ever he remembered to have been. The only set-off against all this sense of desertion was the letter which Colonel Bramleigh had written in his behalf, and which he had remembered to write as he lay suffering on his sick bed. He had told the doctor where to find it, and said it lay sealed and directed. The address was there, but no seal. It was placed in an open envelope, on which was written "Favoured by the Rev. G. L'Estrange." Was the omission of the seal accident or intention? Most probably intention, because he spoke of having sealed it. And yet that might have been a mere phrase to imply that the letter was finished. Such letters were probably in most cases either open, or only closed after being read by him who bore them. Julia would know this. Julia would be able to clear up this point, thought he, as he pondered and plodded homeward.

The Regrets of a Mountaineer.

I HAVE often felt a sympathy, which almost rises to the pathetic, when looking on at a cricket-field or a boat-race. Something of the emotion with which Gray regarded the "distant spires and antique towers" rises within me. It is not, indeed, that I feel very deeply for the fine ingenuous lads who, as somebody says, are about to be degraded into tricky, selfish Members of Parliament. I have seen too much of them. They are very fine animals; but they are rather too exclusively animal. The soul is apt to be in such a very embryonic state within these cases of well-strung bone and muscle. It is impossible for a mere athletic machine, however finely constructed, to appeal very deeply to one's finer sentiments. I can scarcely look forward with even an affectation of sorrow for the time when, if more sophisticated, it will at least have made a nearer approach to the dignity of an intellectual being. It is not the boys who make me feel a touch of sadness; their approaching elevation to the dignity of manhood will raise them on the whole in the scale of humanity: it is the older spectators, whose aspect has in it something affecting. The shaky old gentleman, who played in the days when it was decidedly less dangerous to stand up to bowling than to a cannon-ball, and who now hobbles about on rheumatic joints by the help of a stick; the corpulent elder, who rowed when boats had gangways down their middle, and did not require as delicate a balance as an acrobat's at the top of a living pyramid—these are the persons whom I cannot see without an occasional sigh. They are really conscious that they have lost something which they can never regain; or, if they momentarily forget it, it is even more forcibly impressed upon the spectators. To see a respectable old gentleman of sixty, weighing some fifteen stone, suddenly forget a third of his weight and two-thirds of his years, and attempt to caper like a boy, is indeed a startling phenomenon. To the thoughtless, it may be simply comic; but, without being a Jaques, one may contrive also to suck some melancholy out of it.

Now, as I never caught a cricket-ball, and, on the contrary, have caught numerous crabs in my life, the sympathy which I feel for these declining athletes is not due to any great personal interest in the matter. But I have long anticipated that a similar day would come for me, when I should no longer be able to pursue my favourite sport of mountaineering. Some day I should find that the ascent of a zigzag was as bad as a performance on the treadmill; that I could not look over a precipice without a swimming in the head; and that I could no more jump a crevasse than the Thames at Westminster. None of these things have

come to pass. So far as I know, my physical powers are still equal to the ascent of Mont Blanc or the Jungfrau. But I am no less effectually debarred—it matters not how—from mountaineering. I wander at the foot of the gigantic Alps, and look up longingly to the summits, which are apparently so near, and yet know that they are divided from me by an impassable gulf. In some missionary work I have read that certain South Sea Islanders believed in a future paradise where the good should go on eating for ever with insatiable appetites at an inexhaustible banquet. They were to continue their eternal dinner in a house with open wicker-work sides; and it was to be the punishment of the damned to crawl outside in perpetual hunger and look in through the chinks as little boys look in through the windows of a London cookshop. With similar feelings, I lately watched through a telescope the small black dots, which were really men, creeping up the high flanks of Mont Blanc or Monte Rosa. The eternal snows represented for me the Elysian fields, into which entrance was sternly forbidden, and I lingered about the spot with a mixture of pleasure and pain in the envious contemplation of my more fortunate companions.

I know there are those who will receive these assertions with civil incredulity. Some persons hold that every pleasure with which they cannot sympathize is necessarily affectation, and especially that Alpine travellers risk their lives merely from fashion or desire of notoriety. Others are kind enough to admit that there is something genuine in the passion; but put it on a level with the passion for climbing greased poles. They think it derogatory to the due dignity of Mont Blanc that he should be used as a greased pole, and assure us that the true pleasures of the Alps are those which are within reach of the old and the invalids, who can only creep about villages and along high-roads. I cannot well argue with such detractors from what I consider a noble sport. As for the first class, it is reduced almost to a question of veracity. I say that I enjoy being on the top of a mountain, or, indeed, half-way up a mountain; that climbing is a pleasure to me, and would be so if no one else climbed and no one ever heard of my climbing. They reply that they don't believe it. No more argument is possible than if I were to say that I liked eating olives, and some one asserted that I really eat them only out of affectation. My reply would be simply to go on eating olives; and I hope the reply of mountaineers will be to go on climbing Alps. The other assault is more intelligible. Our critics admit that we have a pleasure; but assert that it is a puerile pleasure—that it leads to an irreverent view of mountain beauty, and to oversight of that which should really most impress a refined and noble mind. To this I shall only make such an indirect reply as may result from a frank confession of my own regrets at giving up the climbing business—perhaps for ever. I am sinking, so to speak, from the butterfly to the caterpillar stage, and, if the creeping thing is really the highest of the two, it will appear that there is something in the substance of my lamentations unworthy of an intellectual being. Let me

try. By way of preface, however, I admit that mountaineering, in my sense of the word, is a sport. It is a sport which, like fishing or shooting, brings one into contact with the sublimest aspects of nature, and, without setting their enjoyment before one as an ultimate end or aim, helps one indirectly to absorb and be penetrated by their influence. Still it is strictly a sport—as strictly as cricket, or rowing, or knurr and spell—and I have no wish to place it on a different footing. The game is won when a mountain-top is reached in spite of difficulties ; it is lost when one is forced to retreat ; and whether won or lost, it calls into play a great variety of physical and intellectual energies, and gives the pleasure which always accompanies an energetic use of our faculties. Still it suffers in some degree from the fact that it is a sport, and especially from the tinge which has consequently been communicated to the narratives. There are two ways which have been appropriated to the description of all sporting exploits. One is to indulge in fine writing about them, to burst out in sentences which swell to paragraphs, and in paragraphs which spread over pages, to plunge into ecstasies about infinite abysses and overpowering splendours, to compare mountains to archangels lying down in eternal winding-sheets of snow, and to convert them into allegories about man's highest destinies and aspirations. This is good when it is well done. Mr. Ruskin has covered the Matterhorn, for example, with a whole web of poetical associations, in language which, to a severe taste, is perhaps a trifle too fine, though he has done it with an eloquence which his bitterest antagonists must freely acknowledge. Yet most humble writers will feel that if they try to bend the Ruskinian bow they will pay the penalty of becoming ridiculous. It is not every one who can with impunity compare Alps to archangels. Tall talk is luckily an object of suspicion to Englishmen, and consequently most writers, and especially those who frankly adopt the sporting view of the mountains, adopt the opposite scheme : they affect something like cynicism ; they mix descriptions of scenery with allusions to fleas or to bitter beer ; they shrink with the prevailing dread of Englishmen from the danger of overstepping the limits of the sublime into its proverbial opposite ; and they humbly try to amuse us because they can't strike us with awe. This, too, if I may venture to say so, is good in its way and place ; and it seems rather hard to these luckless writers when people assume that, because they make jokes on a mountain, they are necessarily insensible to its awful sublimities. A sense of humour is not incompatible with imaginative sensibility ; and even Wordsworth might have been an equally powerful prophet of nature if he could sometimes have descended from his stilts. In short, a man may worship mountains, and yet have a quiet joke with them when he is wandering all day in their tremendous solitudes.

Joking, however, is, it must be admitted, a dangerous habit. I freely admit that, in some humble contributions to Alpine literature, I have myself made some very poor and very unseasonable witticisms. I confess my error, and only wish that I had no worse errors to confess. Still I

think that the poor little jokes in which we mountaineers sometimes indulge have been made liable to rather harsh constructions. We are accused, in downright earnest, not merely of being flippant, but of an arrogant contempt for all persons whose legs are not as strong as our own. We are supposed seriously to wrap ourselves in our own conceit, and to brag intolerably of our exploits. Now I will not say that no mountaineer ever swaggers: the quality called by the vulgar "bounce" is unluckily confined to no profession. Certainly I have seen a man intolerably vain because he could raise a hundredweight with his little finger; and I daresay that the "champion bill-poster," whose name is advertised on the walls of this metropolis, thinks excellence in bill-posting the highest virtue of a citizen. So some men may be silly enough to brag in all seriousness about mountain exploits. However, most lads of twenty learn that it is silly to give themselves airs about mere muscular eminence; and especially is this true of Alpine exploits, first, because they require less physical prowess than almost any other sport, and secondly, because a good amateur still feels himself the hopeless inferior of half the Alpine peasants whom he sees. You cannot be very conceited about a game in which the first clodhopper you meet can give you ten minutes' start in an hour. Still, a man writing in a humorous vein naturally adopts a certain bumptious tone, just as our friend *Punch* ostentatiously declares himself to be omniscient and infallible. Nobody takes him at his word, or supposes that the editor of *Punch* is really the most conceited man in all England. But we poor mountaineers are occasionally fixed with our own careless talk by some outsider who is not in the secret. We know ourselves to be a small sect, and to be often laughed at; we reply by assuming that we are the salt of the earth, and that our amusement is the first and noblest of all amusements. Our only retort to the good-humoured ridicule with which we are occasionally treated is to adopt an affected strut, and to carry it off as if we were the finest fellows in the world. We make a boast of our shame, and say, if you laugh, we must crow. But we don't really mean anything: if we did, the only word which the English language would afford wherewith to describe us would be the very unpleasant antithesis to wise men, and certainly I hold that we have the average amount of common sense. When, therefore, I see us taken to task for swaggering, I think it a trifle hard that this merely playful affectation of superiority should be made a serious fault. For the future I would promise to be careful, if it were worth avoiding the misunderstanding of men who won't take a joke. Meanwhile, I can only state that when Alpine travellers indulge in a little swagger about their own performances and other people's incapacity, they don't mean more than an infinitesimal fraction of what they say, and that they know perfectly well that when history comes to pronounce a final judgment upon the men of the time, it won't put mountain-climbing on a level with patriotism, or even with excellence in the fine arts.

The reproach of real *bona fide* arrogance is, so far as I know, very

little true of Alpine travellers. With the exception of the necessary fringe of exceedingly weak-minded persons to be found in every set of human beings, so far as my experience has gone, whose heads are weaker than their legs, I think the mountaineer is generally modest enough. Perhaps he sometimes flaunts his ice-axes and ropes a little too much before the public eye at Chamouni, as a yachtsman occasionally flourishes his nautical costume at Cowes ; but the fault may be pardoned by those not inexorable to human weaknesses. This opinion, I know, cuts at the root of the most popular theory as to our ruling passion. If we do not climb the Alps to gain notoriety, for what purpose can we possibly climb them ! That same unlucky trick of joking is taken to indicate that we don't care much about the scenery ; for who, with a really susceptible soul could be facetious under the cliffs of the Jungfrau or the ghastly precipices of the Matterhorn ? Hence people who kindly excuse us from the blame of notoriety-hunting generally accept the "greased-pole" theory. We are, it seems, over-grown schoolboys, who, like other schoolboys, enjoy being in dirt, and danger, and mischief, and have as much sensibility for natural beauty as the mountain mules. And against this, as a more serious complaint, I wish to make my feeble protest, in order that my lamentations on quitting the profession may not seem unworthy of a thinking being.

Let me try to recall some of the impressions which mountaineering has left with me, and see whether they throw any light upon the subject. As I gaze at the huge cliffs where I may no longer wander, I find innumerable recollections arise—some of them dim, as though belonging to a past existence ; and some so brilliant that I can scarcely realize my exclusion from the scenes to which they belong. I am standing at the foot of what, to my mind, is the most glorious of all Alpine wonders—the huge Oberland precipice, on the slopes of the Faulhorn or the Wengern Alp. Innumerable tourists have done all that tourists can do to cocknify (if that is the right derivative from cockney) the scenery, but, like the Pyramids or a Gothic cathedral, it throws off the taint of vulgarity by its imperishable majesty. Even on turf strewn with sandwich-papers and empty bottles, even in the presence of hideous peasant-women singing "stand-er auf" for five centimes, we cannot but feel the influence of the scenery. When the sunlight is dying off the snows, or the full moon lighting them up with ethereal tints, even sandwich-papers and singing women may be forgotten. How does the memory of scrambles along snow arêtes, of plunges—luckily not too deep—into crevasses, of toils through long snow-fields, towards a refuge that seemed to recede as we advanced—where, to quote Tennyson, with due alteration, to the traveller toiling in immeasurable snow—

Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The chalet sparkles like a grain of salt ;—

how do such memories as these harmonize with the sense of superlative sublimity ?

One element of mountain beauty is, we shall all admit, their vast size

and steepness. That a mountain is very big, and is faced by perpendicular walls of rock, is the first thing which strikes everybody, and is the whole essence and outcome of a vast quantity of poetical description. Hence the first condition towards a due appreciation of mountain scenery is that these qualities should be impressed upon the imagination. The mere dry statement that a mountain is so many feet in vertical height above the sea and contains so many tons of granite, is nothing. Mont Blanc is about three miles high. What of that? Three miles is an hour's walk for a lady—an eighteen-penny cab-fare—the distance from Hyde Park Corner to the Bank—an express train could do it in three minutes, or a race-horse in five. It is a measure which we have learnt to despise, looking at it from a horizontal point of view, and accordingly most persons, on seeing the Alps for the first time, guess them to be higher, as measured in feet, than they really are. What, indeed, is the use of giving measures in feet to any but the scientific mind? Who cares whether the moon is 250,000 or 2,500,000 miles distant? Mathematicians try to impress upon us that the distance of the fixed stars is only expressible by a row of figures which stretches across a page; suppose it stretched across two or across a dozen pages, should we be any the wiser, or have, in the least degree, a clearer notion of the superlative distances? We civilly say, Dear me! when the astronomer looks to us for the appropriate stare, but we only say it with the mouth; internally our remark is, you might as well have multiplied by a few more millions whilst you were about it. Even astronomers, though not a specially imaginative race, feel the importance of figures, and try to give us some measure which the mind can grasp a little more conveniently. They tell us about the cannon-ball which might have been flying ever since the time of Adam, and not yet have reached the heavenly body, or about the stars which may not yet have become visible, though the light has been flying to us at a rate inconceivable by the mind for an inconceivable number of years; and they succeed in producing a bewildering and giddy sensation, although the numbers are too vast to admit of any accurate apprehension.

We feel a similar need in the case of mountains. Besides the bare statement of figures, it is necessary to have some means for grasping the meaning of the figures. The bare tens and thousands must be clothed with some concrete images. The statement that a mountain is 15,000 feet high, is by itself little more impressive than that it is 3,000; we want something more before we can mentally compare Mont Blanc and Snowdon. Indeed, the same people who guess of a mountain's height at a number of feet much exceeding the reality, show, when they are cross-examined, that they fail to appreciate in any tolerable degree the real meaning of the figures. An old lady, one day, about 11 A. M., proposed to walk from the Eggishorn to the Jungfrau Joch, and to return for luncheon, —the distance being a good twelve hours' journey for trained mountaineers. Every detail of which the huge mass is composed is certain to be underestimated. A gentleman the other day pointed out to me a grand ice-cliff

at the end of a hanging glacier, which must have been at least 100 feet high, and asked me whether that snow was three feet deep. Nothing is more common than for tourists to mistake some huge pinnacle of rock, as big as a church tower, for a traveller. The rocks of the Grand Mulets, in one corner of which the chalet is hidden, are often identified with a party ascending Mont Blanc ; and I have seen boulders as big as a house pointed out confidently as chamois. People who make these blunders must evidently see the mountains as mere toys, however many feet they may give them at a random guess. Huge overhanging cliffs are to them steps within the reach of human legs ; yawning crevasses are ditches to be jumped ; and foaming waterfalls are like streams from penny squirts. Every one knows the avalanches on the Jungfrau, and the curiously disproportionate appearance of the little puffs of white smoke, which are said to be the cause of the thunder ; but the disproportion ceases to an eye that has learnt really to measure distance, and to know that these smoke-puffs represent a cataract of crashing blocks of ice.

Now the first merit of mountaineering is that it enables one to have what theologians would call an experimental faith in the size of mountains ; to substitute a real living belief for a dead intellectual assent. It enables me, first, to assign something like its real magnitude to a rock or a snow-slope ; and, secondly, to measure that magnitude in terms of muscular exertion instead of bare mathematical units. Suppose that we are standing upon the Wengern Alp : between the Mönch and the Eiger there stretches a round white bank, with a curved outline, which we may roughly compare to the back of one of Sir E. Landseer's lions. The ordinary tourists—the old man, the woman, or the cripple, who are supposed to appreciate the real beauties of Alpine scenery—may look at it comfortably from their hotel. They may see its graceful curve, the long straight lines that are ruled in delicate shading down its sides, and the contrast of the blinding white snow with the dark blue sky above ; but they will probably guess it to be a mere bank, a snowdrift, perhaps, which has been piled by the last storm. If you pointed out to them one of the great rocky teeth that project from its summit, and said that that was a guide, they would probably remark that he looked very small, and would fancy that he could jump over the bank with an effort. Now a mountaineer knows, to begin with, that it is a massive rocky rib, covered with snow lying at a sharp angle, and varying perhaps from 500 to 1,000 feet in height. So far he might be accompanied by men of less soaring ambition ; by an engineer who had been mapping the country, or an artist who had been carefully observing the mountains from their bases. They might learn in time to interpret correctly the real meaning of shapes at which the uninitiated guess at random. But the mountaineer can go a step further, and it is the next step which gives the real significance to those delicate curves and lines. He can translate the 500 or 1,000 feet of snow-slope into a more tangible unit of measurement. To him, perhaps, they recall the memory of a toilsome ascent, the sun beating on his head

for five or six hours, the snow returning the glare with still more parching effect ; a stalwart guide toiling all the weary time cutting steps in hard blue ice, the fragments going hissing and spinning down the long straight grooves in the frozen snow till they lost themselves in the yawning chasm below ; and step after step taken carefully along the slippery staircase till at length he triumphantly stepped upon the summit of the tremendous wall that no human foot had scaled before. The little black knobs that rise above the edge represent for him huge impassable rocks, sinking on one side in scarped slippery surfaces towards the snowfield, and on the other stooping in one tremendous cliff to a distorted glacier thousands of feet below. The faint blue line across the upper nev , scarcely distinguishable to the eye, represents to one observer nothing but a trifling undulation ; a second, perhaps, knows that it means a crevasse ; the mountaineer remembers that it is the top of a huge chasm, thirty feet across, and perhaps ten times as deep, with perpendicular sides of glimmering blue ice, and fringed by thick rows of enormous pendent icicles. The marks that are scored in delicate lines, such as might be ruled by a diamond on glass, have been cut by innumerable streams trickling in hot weather from the everlasting snow, or ploughed by succeeding avalanches that have slipped from the huge upper snowfields above. In short, there is no insignificant line or mark that has not its memory or its indication of the strange phenomena of the upper world. True, the same picture is painted upon the retina of all classes of observers ; and so Porson and a schoolboy and a peasant might receive the same physical impression from a set of black and white marks on the page of a Greek play : but to one they would be an incoherent conglomeration of unmeaning and capricious lines ; to another they would represent certain sounds more or less corresponding to some English words ; whilst to the scholar they would reveal some of the noblest poetry in the world, and all the associations of successful intellectual labour. I do not say that the difference is quite so great in the case of the mountains ; still I am certain that no one can decipher the natural writing on the face of a snow-slope or a precipice who has not wandered amongst their recesses and learnt by slow experience what is indicated by marks which an ignorant observer would scarcely notice. True, even one who sees a mountain for the first time may know that, as a matter of fact, a scar on the face of a cliff means, for example, a recent fall of a rock ; but between the bare knowledge and the acquaintance with all which that knowledge implies,—the thunder of the fall, the crash of the smaller fragments, the bounding energy of the descending mass, —there is almost as much difference as between hearing that a battle has been fought and being present at it yourself. We have all read descriptions of Waterloo till we are sick of the subject ; but I imagine that our emotions on seeing the shattered well of Hougoumont are very inferior to those of one of the Guard who should revisit the place where he held out for a long day against the assaults of the French army.

Now to an old mountaineer the Oberland cliffs are full of memories ;

and, more than this, he has learnt the language spoken by every crag and every wave of glacier. It is strange if they do not affect him rather more powerfully than the casual visitor who has never been initiated by practical experience into their difficulties. To him, the huge buttress which runs down from the Mönch is something more than an irregular pyramid, purple with white patches at the bottom and pure white at the top. He fills up the bare outline supplied by the senses with a thousand lively images. He sees tier above tier of rock, rising in a gradually ascending scale of difficulty, covered at first by long lines of the débris that have been splintered by frost from the higher wall, and afterwards rising bare and black, and threatening. He knows instinctively which of the ledges has a dangerous look—where such a bold mountaineer as John Lauener might slip on the polished surface, or be in danger of an avalanche from above. He sees the little shell-like swelling at the foot of the glacier crawling down the steep slope above, and knows that it means an almost inaccessible wall of ice, and the steep snowfields that rise towards the summit are suggestive of something very different from the picture which must have existed in the mind of a German student who once asked me whether it was possible to make the ascent on a mule.

Hence, if mountains owe their influence upon the imagination in a great degree to their size and steepness, and apparent inaccessibility—as no one can doubt that they do, whatever may be the explanation of the fact that people like to look at big, steep, inaccessible objects—the advantages of the mountaineer are obvious. He can measure those qualities on a very different scale from the ordinary traveller. He measures the size, not by the vague abstract term of so many thousand feet, but by the hours of labour, divided into minutes—each separately felt—of strenuous muscular exertion. The steepness is not expressed in degrees, but by the memory of the sensation produced when a snow-slope seems to be rising up and smiting you in the face; when, far away from all human help, you are clinging like a fly to the slippery side of a mighty pinnacle in mid-air. And as for the inaccessibility, no one can measure the difficulty of getting up a thing, who has not wearied muscles and brain in struggling against the opposing obstacles. Alpine travellers, it is said, have removed the romance from the mountains by climbing them. What they have really done is to prove that there exists a narrow line by which a way may be found to the top of any given mountain; but the clue leads through innumerable inaccessibilities; true, you can follow one path, but to right and left are cliffs which no human foot will ever tread, and whose terrors can only be realized when you are in their immediate neighbourhood. The cliffs of the Matterhorn do not bar the way to the top effectually; but it is only by forcing a passage through them that you can really appreciate their terrible significance.

Hence, I say, that the qualities which strike every sensitive observer are impressed upon the mountaineer with tenfold force and intensity. If he is as accessible to poetical influences as his neighbours, and I don't

know why he should be less so, he has opened new avenues of access between the scenery and his mind. He has learnt a language which is but partially revealed to ordinary men. An artist is superior to an unlearned picture-seer, not merely because he has greater natural sensibility, but because he has improved it by methodical experience; because his senses have been sharpened by constant practice till he can catch finer shades of colouring, and more delicate inflexions of line; because, also, the lines and colours have acquired new significance, and been associated with a thousand thoughts with which the mass of mankind have never cared to connect them. The mountaineer is improved by a similar process. But I know some sceptical critics will ask, does not the way in which he is accustomed to regard mountains rather deaden their poetical influence? Doesn't he come to look at them as mere instruments of sport, and overlook their more spiritual teaching? Does not all the excitement of personal adventure and the noisy apparatus of guides, and ropes, and axes, and tobacco, and the fun of climbing, rather dull his perceptions and incapacitate him from perceiving—

The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills?

Well, I have known some stupid and unpoetical mountaineers; and since I have been dismounted from my favourite hobby, I think I have met some similar specimens amongst the humbler class of tourist. There are persons, I fancy, who "do" the Alps; who look upon the Lake of Lucerne as one more task ticked off from their memorandum book, and count up the list of summits visible from the Görnergrat without being penetrated with any keen sense of sublimity. And there are mountaineers who are capable of making a pun on the top of Mont Blanc—and capable of nothing more. Still I venture to deny that even punning is incompatible with poetry, or that those who quote the pun can have no deeper feeling in their bosoms which they are perhaps too shamefaced to quote.

The fact is that that which gives its inexpressible charm to mountaineering is the incessant series of exquisite natural scenes, which are for the most part enjoyed by the mountaineer alone. This is, I am aware, a round assertion; but I will try to support it by a few of the visions which are recalled to me by these Oberland cliffs, and which I have seen profoundly enjoyed by men who perhaps never mentioned them again, and probably in describing their adventures scrupulously avoided the danger of being sentimental.

Thus every traveller has occasionally done a sunrise, and a more lamentable proceeding than the ordinary view of a sunrise can hardly be imagined. You are cold, miserable, breakfastless, have risen shivering from a warm bed, and in your heart long only to creep into bed again. To the mountaineer all this is changed. He is beginning a day full of the anticipation of a pleasant excitement. He has, perhaps, been waiting anxiously for fine weather to try conclusions with some huge giant not yet scaled. He moves out with something of the feeling with which a soldier

goes to the assault of a fortress, but without the same probability of coming home in fragments ; the danger is trifling enough to be merely exhilaratory and to give a pleasant tension to the nerves ; his muscles feel firm and springy, and his stomach, no small advantage to the enjoyment of scenery, is in excellent order. He looks at the sparkling stars with keen satisfaction, prepared to enjoy a fine sunrise with all his faculties at their best, and with the added pleasure of a good omen for his day's work. Then a huge dark mass begins to mould itself slowly out of the darkness ; the sky begins to form a background of deep purple, against which the outline becomes gradually more definite ; and then the peaks catch the exquisite Alpine glow lighting up in rapid succession like a vast illumination ; when at last the steady sunlight settles upon them, and shows every rock and glacier, without even a delicate film of mist to obscure them, he feels his heart bound, and steps out gaily to the assault—just as the people on the Rigi are giving thanks that the show is over and that they may go to bed. Still grander is the sight when the mountaineer has already reached some lofty ridge, and, as the sun rises, stands between the day and the night—the valley still in deep sleep with the mists lying between the folds of the hills, and the snowpeaks standing out clear and pale white just before the sun reaches them, whilst a broad band of orange light runs all round the vast horizon. The grandest of all such sights that live in my memory is that of a sunset from the Aiguille de Gouté. The snow at our feet was glowing with rich light, and the shadows in our footsteps green. Beneath us was a vast horizontal floor of thin level mists, spreading over the boundless landscape, and tinged with every hue of sunset. Through its rents and gaps we could see the lower mountains, the distant plains, and a fragment of the Lake of Geneva lying in a more sober purple. Above us rose the solemn mass of Mont Blanc in the richest glow of an Alpine sunset. The sense of lonely sublimity was almost oppressive, and although half our party was suffering from sickness, I believe even the guides were moved to a sense of solemn beauty.

These grand scenic effects are occasionally seen by ordinary travellers, though the ordinary traveller is for the most part out of temper at 3 A.M. The mountaineer can enjoy them, both because his frame of mind is properly toned to receive the natural beauty, and because he alone sees them with their best accessories, amidst the silence of the eternal snow and the vast panoramas visible from the loftier summits. And he has a similar advantage in most of the great natural phenomena of the cloud and the sunshine. No sight in the Alps is more impressive than to see the huge rocks of a black precipice suddenly frowning out through the chasms of a storm-cloud. It is grand as we see it from the safe verandahs of the inn at Grindelwald, but far grander in the silence of the central Alps amongst the savage wilderness of rock and snow. Again, I have been climbing for two or three hours, with nothing in sight but the varying wreaths of mists that chased each other monotonously along the rocky ribs whose snow-covered backbone we were laboriously climbing. Suddenly

there is a puff of wind, and looking round we find that we have in an instant pierced the clouds, and emerged, as it were, on the surface of the ocean of vapour. Beneath us stretches for hundreds of miles the level fleecy floor, and above are standing out clear in the eternal sunshine every mountain, from Mont Blanc to Monte Rosa and the Jungfrau. Or, again, I look down from the edge of a torn rocky parapet into an apparently fathomless abyss, where nothing but what an Alpine traveller calls a "strange formless wreathing of vapour" indicates the storm-wind that is raging below us. I might go on indefinitely recalling the strangely impressive scenes that frequently startle the traveller in the waste upper world; but language—even if I had the eloquence of Mr. Ruskin—is feeble indeed to convey even a glimmering of what is to be seen to those who have not seen it for themselves, and to them it can be little more than a peg upon which to hang their own recollections. These glories, in which the mountain Spirit reveals himself to his true worshippers, are only to be gained by the appropriate service of climbing, at some risk, though a very trifling risk if he is approached with due form and ceremony, into the furthest recesses of his shrines. And without seeing them, I maintain that no man has really seen the Alps.

The difference between the exoteric and the esoteric school of mountaineers may be indicated by their different view of glaciers. At Grindelwald, for example, it is the fashion to go and "see the glaciers"—heaven save the mark! Ladies in costumes, heavy German professors, Americans doing the Alps at a gallop, Cook's tourists, and other varieties of a well-known genus, go off in shoals and see—what?—a gigantic mass of ice, strangely torn with a few of the exquisite blue crevasses, but defiled and in dirt and ruins. A stream foul with mud oozes out from the base: the whole concern seems to be melting fast away; the summer sun has evidently got the best of it in these lower regions, and nothing can resist him but the great masses of decaying rock that strew the surface in confused lumps. It is as much like the glacier of the upper regions as the melting fragments of snow in a London street are like the surface of the fresh snow that has just fallen in a country field. And by way of improving its attractions, a perpetual picnic is going on, and the ingenious natives have hewed a tunnel into the ice, for admission to which they charge certain centimes. The unlucky glacier reminds me at his latter end of a wretched whale stranded on a beach, dissolving into masses of blubber, and hacked by remorseless fishermen, instead of plunging at his ease in the deep blue water. Far above, where the glacier begins his course, he is seen only by the true mountaineer. There are vast amphitheatres of pure snow, of which the glacier known to tourists is merely the insignificant drainage, but whose very existence they do not generally suspect. They are utterly ignorant that from the top of the ice-fall which they visit you may walk for hours on the eternal ice. After a long climb you come to the region where the glacier is truly at its noblest; where the surface is a spotless white; where the crevasses are enormous rents sinking

to profound depths, with walls of the purest blue ; where the glacier is torn and shattered by the energetic forces which mould it, but has an expression of superabundant power, like a full stream fretting against its banks and plunging through the vast gorges that it has hewn for itself in the course of centuries. The bases of the mountains are immersed in a deluge of cockneyism—fortunately a shallow deluge—whilst their summits rise high into the bracing air, where everything is pure and poetical.

The difference which I have endeavoured to indicate is more or less traceable in a wider sense. The mountains are exquisitely beautiful, indeed, from whatever points of view we contemplate them : and the mountaineer would lose much if he never saw the beauties of the lower valleys, of pasturages deep in flowers, and dark pine-forests with the summits shining from far off between the stems. Only, as it seems to me, he has the exclusive prerogative of thoroughly enjoying one—and that the most characteristic, though by no means the only element of the scenery. There may be a very good dinner spread before twenty people ; but if nineteen of them were teetotallers, and the twentieth drank his wine like a man, he would be the only one to do it full justice ; the others might praise the meat or the fruits, but he would alone enjoy the champagne : and in the great feast which Nature spreads before us (a stock metaphor which emboldens me to make the comparison) the high mountain scenery acts the part of the champagne. Unluckily, too, the teetotallers are very apt, in this case also, to sit in judgment upon their more adventurous neighbours. Especially are they pleased to carp at the views from high summits. I have been constantly asked, with a covert sneer, Did it repay you ?—a question which involves the assumption that one wants to be repaid, as though the labour were not itself part of the pleasure, and which implies a doubt that the view is really enjoyable. People are always demonstrating that the lower views are the most beautiful ; and at the same time complaining that mountaineers frequently turn back without looking at the view from the top, as though that would necessarily imply that they cared nothing for scenery. In opposition to which I must first remark that, as a rule, every step of an ascent has a beauty of its own, which one is quietly absorbing even when one is not directly making it a subject of contemplation, and that the view from the top is generally the crowning glory of the whole.

It will be enough if I conclude with an attempt to illustrate this last assertion ; and I will do it by still referring to the Oberland. Every visitor with a soul for the beautiful admires the noble form of the Wetterhorn—the lofty snow-crowned pyramid rising in such light and yet massive lines from its huge basement of perpendicular cliffs. The Wetterhorn has, however, a further merit. To my mind—and I believe most connoisseurs of mountain-tops agree with me—it is one of the most impressive summits in the Alps. It is not a sharp pinnacle like the Weisshorn, or a cupola like Mont Blanc, or a grand rocky tooth like the Monte Rosa, but a long and nearly horizontal knife-edge, which, as seen from either end, has of

course the appearance of a sharp-pointed cone. It is when balanced upon this ridge—sitting astride of the knife-edge on which one can hardly stand without giddiness—that one fully appreciates an Alpine precipice. Mr. Wills has admirably described the first ascent and the impression it made upon him in a paper which has become classical for succeeding adventurers. Behind the snow-slope sinks with perilous steepness towards the wilderness of glacier and rock through which the ascent has lain. But in front the ice sinks with even greater steepness for a few feet or yards. Then it curves over and disappears, and the next thing that the eye catches is the meadow-land of Grindelwald, some 9,000 feet below. I have looked down many precipices, where the eye can trace the course of every pebble that bounds down the awful slopes, and where I have shuddered as some dislodged fragment showed the course which, in case of accident, my own fragments would follow. A precipice is always, for obvious reasons, far more terrible from above than from below. The creeping, tingling sensation which passes through one's limbs—even when one knows oneself to be in perfect safety—testifies to the thrilling influence of the sights. But I have never so realized the terrors of a terrific cliff as when I could not see it. The awful gulf which intervened between me and the green meadows struck the imagination by its invisibility. It was like the view which may be seen from the ridge of a cathedral-roof, where the eaves have for their immediate background the pavement of the streets below; only this cathedral was 9,000 feet high. Now, any one standing at the foot of the Wetterhorn may admire their stupendous massiveness and steepness; but to feel their influence enter into the very marrow of one's bones, it is necessary to stand at the summit, and to fancy the one little slide down the short ice-slope, to be followed apparently by a bound into clear ice and a fall down to the houses, from heights where the eagle never ventures to soar.

This is one of the Alpine beauties, which, of course, it is beyond the power of art to imitate, and which people are, therefore, apt to ignore. But it is not the only one to be seen on the high summits. It is often said that these views are not "beautiful"—apparently because they won't go into a picture, or, to put it more fairly, because no picture can in the faintest degree imitate them. But without quarrelling about words, I think that even if "beautiful" be not the most correct epithet, they have a marvellously stimulating effect upon the imagination. Let us look round in imagination from this wonderful pinnacle in mid-air and note one or two of the most striking elements of the scenery.

You are, in the first place, perched on a cliff, whose presence is the more felt because it is unseen. Then you are in a region over which eternal silence is brooding. Not a sound ever comes there except the occasional fall of a splintered fragment of rock, or a layer of snow; no stream is heard trickling, and the sounds of animal life are left thousands of feet below. The most that you can hear is some mysterious noise made by the wind eddying round the gigantic rocks; sometimes a strange flapping

sound, as if an unearthly flag was shaking its invisible folds in the air. The enormous tract of country over which your view extends—most of it dim and almost dissolved into air by distance—intensifies the strange influence of the silence. You feel the force of the line I have just quoted from Wordsworth,—

The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

None of the travellers whom you can see crawling at your feet have the least conception of what is meant by the silent solitudes of the High Alps. To you, it is like a return to the stir of active life when, after hours of wandering, you return to hear the tinkling of the cowbells below ; to them the same sound is the ultimate limit of the habitable world.

Whilst your mind is properly toned by these influences, you become conscious of another fact, to which the common variety of tourists is necessarily insensible. You begin to find out for the first time what the mountains really are. On one side, you look back upon the "urns of the silent snow," upon the huge reservoirs from which the Oberland glaciers descend. You see the vast stores from which the great rivers of Europe are replenished, and the monstrous crawling masses that are carving the mountains into shape, and the gigantic bulwarks that separate two great quarters of the world. From below these wild regions are half invisible ; they are masked by the outer line of mountains ; and it is not till you are able to command them from some lofty point that you can appreciate the grandeur of the huge barriers and the snow that is piled within their folds. There is another half of the view equally striking. Looking towards the north, the whole of Switzerland is couched at your feet ; the Jura and the Black Forest lie on the far horizon. And then you know what is the nature of a really mountainous country. From below everything is seen in a kind of distorted perspective. The people of the valley naturally think that the valley is everything—that the country resembles old-fashioned maps, where a few sporadic lumps are distributed amongst towns and plains. The true proportions reveal themselves as you ascend. The valleys, you can now see, are nothing but narrow trenches scooped out amidst a tossing waste of mountain, just to carry off the drainage. The great ridges run hither and thither, having it all their own way, and wild and untameable regions of rock or open grass or forest, at whose feet the valleys exist on sufferance. Creeping about amongst the roots of the hills, you half miss the hills themselves ; you quite fail to understand the massiveness of the mountain chains, and, therefore, the wonderful energy of the forces that have heaved the surface of the world into these distorted shapes. And it is to a half-conscious sense of the powers that must have been at work that a great part of the influence of mountain scenery is due. Geologists tell us that a theory of catastrophes is unphilosophical ; but whatever may be the scientific truth, our minds are impressed as though we were witnessing the results of some incredible convulsion. At Stonehenge, we ask what human beings could have

erected these strange grey monuments, and in the mountains we instinctively ask what force can have carved out the Matterhorn and placed the Wetterhorn on its gigantic pedestal. Now, it is not till we reach some commanding point that we realize the amazing extent of country over which the solid ground has been shaking and heaving itself in irresistible tumult.

Something, it is true, of this last effect may be seen from such mountains as the Rigi or the Faulhorn. There, too, one seems to be at the centre of a vast sphere, the earth bending up in Alp-like form to meet the sky, and the blue vault above stretching in an arch majestic by its enormous extent. There you seem to see a sensible fraction of the world at your feet. But the effect is far less striking when other mountains obviously look down upon you, when, as it were, you are looking at the waves of the great ocean of hills merely from the crest of one of the waves themselves, and not from some lighthouse that rises far over their heads ; for the Wetterhorn, like the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau, owes one great beauty to the fact that it is on the edge of the lower country, and stands between the real giants and the crowd of inferior, though still enormous, masses in attendance upon them. And, in the next place, your mind is far better adapted to receive impressions of sublimity when you are alone, in a silent region, with a black sky above and giant cliffs all round, with a sense still in your mind, if not of actual danger, still of danger that would become real with the slightest relaxation of caution, and with the world divided from you by hours of snow and rock.

I will go no further, not because I have no more to say, but because descriptions of scenery soon become wearisome, and because I have, I hope, said enough to show that the mountaineer may boast of some intellectual pleasures ; that he is not a mere scrambler, but that he looks for poetical impressions, as well as for such small glory as his achievements may gain in a very small circle. Something of what he gains fortunately sticks by him : he does not quite forget the mountain language ; his eye still recognizes the space and the height and the glory of the lofty mountains. And yet there is some pain in wandering ghostlike among the scenes of his earlier pleasures. For my part, I try in vain to hug myself in a sense of comfort ; I turn over in bed when I hear the stamping of heavily-nailed shoes along the passage of an inn about two A.M. I feel the skin of my nose complacently when I see others returning with a glistening tight aspect about that unluckily prominent feature, and know that in a day or two they will be raw and blistered and burning. I think, in a comfortable inn at night, of the miseries of those who are trying to sleep in damp hay, or on hard boards of châlets, at once cold and stiffy and haunted by innumerable fleas. I congratulate myself on having a whole skin and unfractured bones, and on the small danger of ever breaking them over an Alpine precipice. But yet I secretly know that these consolations are feeble. It is little use to avoid early rising and discomfort and even fleas, if he also loses the pleasures to which they

were the sauce,—rather too *piquante* a sauce occasionally, it must be admitted. The philosophy is all very well which recommends moderate enjoyment, regular exercise, and a careful avoidance of risk and over-excitement. That is, it is all very well so long as risk and excitement and immoderate enjoyment are out of your power; but it does not stand the test of looking on and seeing them just beyond your reach. In time, no doubt, a man may grow calm; he may learn to enjoy the pleasures and the exquisite beauties of the lower regions,—though they, too, are most fully enjoyed when they have a contrast with beauties of a different and pleasures of a keener excitement. When first debarred, at any rate, one feels like a balloon full of gas, and fixed by immovable ropes to the prosaic ground. It is pleasant to lie on one's back in a bed of rhododendrons, and look up to a mountain top peering at one from above a bank of cloud; but it is pleasantest when one has qualified oneself for repose by climbing the peak the day before and becoming familiar with its terrors and its beauties. In time, doubtless, one may get reconciled to anything; one may settle down to be a caterpillar, even after one has known the pleasures of being a butterfly; one may become philosophical, and have one's clothes let out; and even in time, perhaps, though it is almost too terrible to contemplate, be content with a mule or a carriage, or that lowest depth to which human beings can sink, and for which the English language happily affords no name, a *chaise à porteurs*: and even in such degradation the memory of better times may be pleasant; for I doubt much whether it is truth the poet sings,—

That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Certainly to a philosophical mind the sentiment is doubtful. For my part, the fate which has cut me off, if I may use the expression, in the flower of my youth, and doomed me to be a non-climbing animal in future, is one which ought to exclude grumbling. I cannot indicate it more plainly, for I might so make even the grumbling in which I have already indulged look like a sin. I can only say that there are some very delightful things in which it is possible to discover an infinitesimal drop of bitterness, and that the mountaineer who undertakes to cut himself off from his favourite pastime, even for reasons which he will admit in his wildest moods to be more than amply sufficient, must expect at times to feel certain pangs of regret, however quickly they may be smothered.

Shooting-Stars, Meteors, and Jérolites.

On a calm, clear night, when

All the stars
Shine, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest,

the contemplation of the celestial vault raises in the least thoughtful mind vague suggestions of infinity, eternity, and omnipotence. A knowledge of the wonders which have been revealed by modern astronomical investigations, largely enhances these emotions. Looking into the starlit depths of heaven, the astronomer knows that the objects presented to him shine from distances so great, that not only are they inconceivable themselves, but that the very unit by which he attempts to gauge them is inconceivable. He knows that what he sees is not that which *is*, but that which *was*,—years ago as respects the nearer parts of the heaven-scape, but long ages ago, he doubts not, as respects faintly shining stars visible only by momentary scintillations. He has good reasons, indeed, for surmising that the diffused illumination, which, on the darkest night lights up the background of the view, had been travelling towards the earth myriads of ages before she had assumed her present state, or had been inhabited by the races now subsisting upon her surface. So long, he believes, has light,—which would eight times girdle the earth in a second,—been occupied in journeying towards us from the depths into which he is gazing. Thus the same view exhibits to him eternity of time and infinity of space. He sees also omnipotence in the operation of those laws—the impress of the Almighty mind—under whose action all that he sees is undergoing a process of change, vast, resistless, unending, yet so solemn in its grand progress that man knows no apter type for immutability.

To an observer impressed with these emotions, the contrast is startling when there is a sudden exhibition of life and motion in the calm realms of night. We cannot, however, look for any long interval of time towards any quarter of the sky, without perceiving indications more or less distinct of objects other than the fixed stars. Now on one side, now on another we seem to catch momentary glimpses of moving light, disappearing too rapidly to be detected. But before many minutes have elapsed we receive less doubtful evidence. There sweeps silently and swiftly across the starlit depths a palely gleaming light, which disappears after traversing an arc of greater or less extent. We know not how it may be with others, but to ourselves the impression conveyed by the apparition of a shooting-star, is that no apter emblem can be conceived of the finite and the

feeble.* The suddenness with which these objects appear, their hasty movements, and their short duration, alike conduce to render as marked as possible the contrast they present to the fixed stars.

But though shooting-stars are short-lived, and apparently insignificant, yet we shall presently see that the relations they present to other celestial objects are not unimportant. We are brought by means of them into contact, so to speak, with external space. "Accustomed to know non-telluric bodies solely by measurement, by calculation, and by the inferences of our reason," writes Humboldt, "it is with a kind of astonishment that we touch, weigh, and submit to chemical analysis, metallic and earthy masses appertaining to the world without." The vulgar sense sees, in shooting-stars, nothing but "dying sparks in the clear vault of heaven;" the reflecting mind will find much to arouse interest, and much that is worthy of close study and investigation.

We proceed to present the results of observations—(i.) casual and (ii.) particular—which have been made on shooting-stars, meteors, and aérolites.

A careful observer directing his attention towards any quarter of the sky on a clear night, will see on an average six shooting-stars per hour. We may assume therefore that about fifteen appear above the horizon of any place during each hour. More appear after than before midnight, the most favourable time for observation being from one o'clock to three. In tropical climates shooting-stars are seen oftener, and shine far more brilliantly than in our northern climates. This peculiarity is due no doubt to the superior purity and serenity of the air within and near the tropics, not to any real superiority in the number of falling-stars. Sir Alexander Burnes, speaking of the transparency of the dry atmosphere of Bokhara, a place not farther south than Madrid, but raised 1,200 feet above the sea-level, says—"The stars have uncommon lustre, and the Milky Way shines gloriously in the firmament. There is also a never-ceasing display of the most brilliant meteors, which dart like rockets in the sky; ten or twelve of them are sometimes seen in an hour, assuming every colour; fiery-red, blue, pale, and faint." In our climate about two-thirds of all the shooting-stars seen are white; next in frequency come yellow stars, one yellow star being seen for about five white stars; there are about twice as many yellow as orange stars, and more than twice as many orange as green or blue stars.

Meteors or fire-balls are far less common than shooting-stars. They are magnificent objects, their brilliancy often exceeding that of the full moon. Some, even, have been so brilliant as to cast a shadow in full daylight. They are generally followed by a brilliant luminous train,

* "The spinstress Werpeja," says a Lithuanian myth, "spins the thread of the new-born child, and each thread ends in a star. When death approaches, the thread breaks, and the star falls, quenching its light, to the earth."—Grimm: *Deutsche Mythologie*.

which seems to be drawn out of the substance of the fire-ball itself. Their motion is not commonly uniform, but (so to speak) impulsive ; they often seem to follow a waved or contorted path ; their form changes visibly, and in general they disappear with a loud explosion. Occasionally, however, a meteor will be seen to separate without explosion into a number of distinct globes, accompanying each other in parallel courses, and each followed by a train. " Sometimes," says Kaemtz, " a fire-ball is divided into fragments, each of which forms a luminous globe, which then bursts in its turn ; in others the mass, after having given vent to the interior gases, closes in upon itself, and then swells out anew to burst a second time." Meteors which move impulsively, generally burst at each bound, giving forth smoke and vapours, and shining afterwards with a new lustre. In some instances the crash of the explosion is so great that " houses tremble, doors and windows open, and men imagine that there is an earthquake."

Aérolites, or meteoric stones, are bodies which fall from the sky upon the earth. They are less common than meteors, but that they are far from being uncommon is shown by this, that in the British Museum alone there are preserved several hundreds of these bodies. They vary greatly in size and form ; some being no larger than a man's fist, while others weigh many hundreds of pounds. Marshal Bazaine has lately brought from Mexico a meteorite weighing more than three-quarters of a ton ; but this weight has been far exceeded in several cases. Thus a meteorite was presented to the British Museum in 1865, which weighs no less than three and a half tons. It had been found near Melbourne, and one half of the mass had been promised to the Melbourne Museum. But fortunately it was saved from injury. A meteorite weighing one and a quarter tons, which had been found close to the greater one, was transferred from the British to the Melbourne Museum, and the great meteorite forwarded unbroken to our national collection. A yet larger meteorite lies on the plain of Tucuman in South America ; it has not been weighed, but measurement shows that its weight cannot fall short of fourteen or fifteen tons. It is from seven to seven and a half feet in length.

There have been twenty well authenticated instances of stone-falls in the British Isles since 1620. One of these took place in the immediate neighbourhood of London, on May 18th, 1680. Besides these, two meteoric stones, not seen to fall, have been found in Scotland.

The Chinese, who recorded everything, give the most ancient records of stone-falls.* Their accounts of these phenomena extend to 644 years before our era, their accounts of shooting-stars to 687 B.C. We need not remind our classical readers of the stone which fell at Aegos Potamos,

* The fall of stones said by Livy to have taken place on the Alban Hill, can hardly be accepted as an historical fact. There are, however, indubitable records, not due to human agency, of much more ancient stone-falls ; since *fossil meteorites* are found imbedded in the secondary and tertiary formations.

b.c. 465, and which was as large as two millstones. In the year 921, there fell at Narni a mass which projected four feet above the river, into which it was seen to fall. There is a Mongolian tradition that there fell from heaven upon a plain near the source of the Yellow River, in Western China, a black rocky mass forty feet high. In 1620, there fell at Jahlinder a mass of meteoric iron, from which the Emperor Jehangire had a sword forged.

These traditions had long been known, but men were not very ready to accept, without question, the fact that stones and mineral masses actually fall upon the earth from the sky. In 1803, however, a fall of aérolites occurred which admitted of no cavil. On the 26th of April, in that year, a fiery globe was seen to burst into fragments, nearly over the town of L'Aigle, in Normandy. By this explosion thousands of stones were scattered over an elliptical area seven or eight miles long, and about four miles broad. The stones were hot (but not red-hot) and smoking; the heaviest weighed about seventeen and a half pounds. The sky had been perfectly clear a few moments before the explosion. With a laudable desire to profit by so favourable an opportunity, the French Government sent M. Biot to the scene of the fall. His systematic inquiries and report sufficed to overcome the unbelief which had prevailed on the subject of stone-showers.

Another very remarkable fall is that which took place on October 1st, 1857, in the department of Yonne. Baron Seguier was with some workmen in an avenue of the grounds of Hautefeuille near Charny, when they were startled by several explosions quite unlike thunder, and by strong atmospheric disturbances. Several windows of the château were found to be broken. At the same time a proprietor of Château-Renard saw a globe of fire "travelling rapidly through the air towards Vernisson." Baron Seguier heard shortly after that at the same hour a shower of aérolites had fallen a few leagues from Hautefeuille, and in a locality lying precisely in the direction towards which the proprietor of Château-Renard had seen the meteor travelling. A mason had seen the fall, and narrowly escaped being struck by one of the fragments. This piece, which was found buried deep in the earth, near the foot of the mason's ladder, was presented to the Academy of Sciences by Baron Seguier.

Aérolites often fall from a clear sky. More commonly, however, a dark cloud is observed to form, and the stony shower is seen to be projected from its bosom. It is probable that what appears as a bright train by night is seen as a cloud by day. Something seems to depend on the position of the observer. The meteor which burst over L'Aigle appeared wholly free from cloud or smoke to those who saw it from Alençon, while to observers in L'Aigle the phenomenon was presented of a dark cloud forming suddenly in a clear sky. In a fall which took place near Kleinwinden (not far from Mühlhausen), on September 16th, 1848, a large aérolite descended with a noise like thunder, in a clear sky, and without the formation of any cloud.

The length of time during which fire-balls, which produce aérolites, are visible, has been variously stated; but we have no evidence which would lead us to accept the story of Daimachos, that the fiery cloud from which the stone of Ægos Potamos was projected had been visible for seventy days in succession. The story seems to identify the author with a certain Daimachos of Plataea described by Strabo as a "vendor of lies."

There is another singular fiction respecting fire-balls. It was said that shooting-stars and meteors were in reality fibrous gelatinous bodies, and that such bodies had been found where meteors had been seen to fall. Reference is not unfrequently made to this fable by writers ancient and modern. Thus Dryden, in his dedication to *The Spanish Friar* speaking of Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois* says,—“I have sometimes wondered in the reading, what was become of those glaring colours which amazed me in *Bussy d'Ambois* upon the theatre; but when I had taken up what I supposed a fallen star, I found I had been cozened with a jelly; nothing but a cold dull mass, which glittered no longer than it was shooting.”

One circumstance remains to be mentioned among the results of casual observation. On certain occasions shooting-stars have been observed to fall in much greater numbers than on ordinary nights. Among the earliest records of such a phenomenon is the statement by Theophanes, the Byzantine historian, that in November, 472, at Constantinople, the sky seemed to be alive with flying meteors. In the month of October, 902, again, so many falling-stars were seen that the year was afterwards called the “year of stars.” Condé relates that the Arabs connected this fall with the death of King Ibrahim Ben-Ahmed, which took place on the night of the star-shower. The year 1029 was also remarkable for a great star-fall, and in the annals of Cairo it is related that, “In the year 599, in the last Moharrun (October 19, 1202), the stars appeared like waves upon the sky, towards the east and west; they flew about like locusts, and were dispersed from left to right.” A shower of stars, accompanied by the fall of several aérolites, took place over England and France on April 4th, 1095. This was considered by many as a token of God’s displeasure with King William II.: “Therefore the kynge was tolde by divers of his familiars that God was not content with his lyvying; but he was so wilful and proud of mind that he regarded little their saying.”

In modern times, also, some very remarkable star-showers have been observed. Amongst these one of the most noteworthy was that seen by Humboldt, when travelling with M. Bonpland in South America. He writes:—“On the morning of the 13th of November we saw a most extraordinary display of shooting-stars. Thousands of bolides and stars succeeded each other during four hours. Their motion was very regular from north to south. From the beginning of the phenomenon there was not a space equal in extent to three diameters of the moon, which was not filled each instant with shooting-stars. All the meteors left phosphorescent traces behind them.”

In 1833, also, there was a magnificent display of meteoric fireworks. It was accompanied by a brilliant exhibition of the aurora borealis. The same phenomenon was seen also at Bremen, in 1838, during a fall of meteors and shooting-stars.

Before proceeding to detail some of the singular results which have rewarded the modern examination of this interesting subject, it may be well to exhibit the guesses and theories which were suggested of old, to explain the observed phenomena.

The Greeks, as usual with them, guessed boldly, sometimes acutely. Among the earliest of their theories we find the view that shooting-stars are generated by vapours ascending from the earth,—an hypothesis that has been sustained quite recently by Egen, Fischer, and Ideler. Aristotle supposed that aërolites were masses of stone which had been raised by tempests from the earth's surface. He explained in this way the appearance even of the gigantic mass which fell at *Ægos Potamos*. Others again, seeing that meteorites fell in full sunlight, conceived the notion that they were projected to us from the sun. Amongst those who held this opinion was Anaxagoras of Clazomene. This philosopher, we are told, predicted the fall of aërolites from the sun,—a tradition registered and ridiculed by Pliny. But some among the Greeks held opinions which, though somewhat vaguely expressed, may be looked upon as (at the least) very good guesses. We may cite, for instance, the following remarkable passage in Plutarch's life of Lysander:—

“The opinion held by those who thought that shooting-stars are not mere emanations from ethereal fire, becoming extinguished quickly after being kindled, is a probable one; nor are falling stars produced by the inflammation and combustion of a mass of air which had moved away towards the higher regions; rather they are *celestial bodies* which are precipitated through an intermission of the centrifugal force, and fall, not only on inhabited places, but in even larger numbers into the great sea, where they are never seen.” We find in this passage a tacit reference to the opinion of Anaxagoras that the heavenly bodies are masses of rock torn from the earth by the centrifugal force of the surrounding ether, and set on fire in the heavens. The opinion of Diogenes of Apollonia is not dissimilar; he says, “Together with the visible stars there move other invisible ones, which are therefore without names. These sometimes fall on the earth and are extinguished, as took place with the star of stone which fell at *Ægos Potamos*.”

In the Middle Ages the phenomena presented by shooting-stars were explained in a somewhat authoritative, but not very satisfactory, manner. The judicious use of a few set phrases sufficed to clear up all difficulties. We hear of humours and exhalations attracted by affinity to the upper regions of air; of condensation, concretion, ultimate repulsion, and so on; and all this not in a doubtful hypothetical tone, but in the authoritative manner of men possessing all knowledge. On one point especially the

writers of those days are very positive,—meteors are in no way to be regarded as astronomical phenomena. They marked out peremptorily the bodies they consented to look upon as celestial. Their knowledge of the laws regulating these bodies was far too exact, in their opinion, for any doubt to exist that a number of erratic, short-lived bodies, moving in a hasty and undignified manner across the sky, were not to be admitted as members of the stately family of planets, still less as copartners with the stars of the crystalline. One, even, who saw opening out before him a new system, who aided to overturn the old, and to lay the foundation of modern astronomy—the ingenious Kepler—yielded to the old idea on this point—to the fascinating phantasy that things are to be seen as men would have them, not as indeed they are. In his case, perhaps, this is hardly to be wondered at. He had discovered and rejoiced in the “harmonies of the planets;” he had written in his enthusiasm,—“ Nothing holds me; I will indulge my sacred fury; I will triumph over mankind, for I have stolen the golden vases of the Egyptians.” And it would doubtless have seemed as a strange thing to him to conceive that he had heard but a few stray notes of the music of the spheres, that he had not yet—as he had hoped—

Come on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world,
Æonian music measuring out
The steps of Time.

We turn to the investigations of modern scientific men,—of men whose principle it is, or ought to be, that theory-framing should be preceded by systematic observation, by careful calculation and examination, and, if possible, by experiment. They have successfully attacked problems which seem to the uninitiated wholly insoluble,—determining the heights at which shooting-stars appear and disappear, the velocity with which they move, their size and weight, nay, the very substances of which they are composed; they have discovered laws regulating the numbers and paths of those visitors; they have analysed aérolites chemically and microscopically; and, lastly, they have sought to determine whether it is possible to construct artificial meteorites.

The determination of the height of shooting-stars is a problem which has been successfully attacked by Brandes, Heis, Schmidt, Olbers, and others. From the results of observations made by these astronomers, Professor Newton and Mr. Alexander Herschel have calculated that shooting-stars appear, on an average, at a height of seventy-two miles, and disappear at a height of fifty-two miles. The Padre Secchi, at Rome, on the nights of 5th-10th August, carried on a series of simultaneous observations, by telegraphic communication between Rome and Civita Vecchia. The result obtained by him was that shooting-stars appear at a height of seventy-four and a half miles, and disappear at a height of fifty miles,—a result almost coincident with the former. It appears,

then, that shooting-stars are some twenty miles nearer when they are just disappearing than at their first appearance.

When the distance of a shooting-star is known, it is easy to determine the velocity of the star's motion. It appears from a careful series of observations that shooting-stars describe a visible arc many miles in length, with an average velocity of about thirty-four miles per second. This velocity is nearly twice as great as that wherewith the earth describes her orbit about the sun. Moving with such a velocity, a body would pass from the earth to the moon in about a couple of hours, or from London to Edinburgh in about ten seconds.

Meteors, as might be expected, approach nearer to the earth than shooting-stars. They do not in general move quite so rapidly. A remarkable meteor which appeared on April 29th, was seen by two practised observers, Messrs. Baxendell and Wood, at Liverpool and Weston-super-Mare respectively. From a careful examination of their observations it results that the meteor appeared when at a height of fifty-two miles vertically over Lichfield, that it travelled in a southerly direction at the rate of about twenty miles per second, and disappeared when over Oxford at a height of thirty-seven miles, having travelled over a course of nearly seventy-five miles. The meteor appears to having belonged to the detonating class. Eight minutes after its appearance Mr. Wood heard a sound "which resembled the momentary roar of a railway-train, at some distance, crossing over a bridge." It is worth noticing that Mr. Wood must have heard the roar of the meteor inversely, that is, the first part of the sound he heard was the part generated last, and *vice versa*. A detonation was also heard at Stony Stratford, a place lying nearly under the path of the meteor.

To determine the actual size of a meteor is not easy, nor indeed can much weight be attached to such determinations. From observations of the apparent dimensions of several meteors which have travelled at known distances, it would seem that these bodies vary in diameter from 100 to 13,000 feet.

Singularly enough, it is easier to determine the weight of a meteor or shooting-star than its size. The method of doing so could not be very well explained in these pages; it will be sufficient to say that it depends on the observation of the amount of light received from a body travelling with known velocity through a resisting atmosphere. From such observations it appears that shooting-stars weigh on an average but a few ounces, while some meteors weigh hundreds of pounds. We have seen that aérolites of much greater weight occasionally reach the earth.

Still more strange is the fact that we are able to determine the substances, or some of them, which enter into the composition of meteors or shooting-stars. This is done by means of a spectroscope so constructed as to take in a large part of the heavens. For instance, when an instrument of this sort is turned towards the Great Bear the spectra of

the seven principal stars of that constellation are seen at one view. Mr. Herschel observed with such an instrument the spectra of many of the shooting-stars which appeared on the nights 9th-11th August. He found that some of these bodies exhibit a continuous spectrum, showing that they are probably solid bodies, heated to ignition. Others exhibit a greyish white spectrum, indicating (probably) a nucleus and train of heated sparks. But the greater number of meteors give a spectrum consisting of one or more lines, showing that during apparition most of these bodies are gaseous. The gaseous meteors exhibit with remarkable distinctness a strong yellow line, perfectly agreeing in position with the well-known line given by the ignited vapour of the metal sodium. Other lines, due to the presence either of potassium, sulphur, or phosphorus, are also frequently seen. It is noteworthy that the sodium line is exhibited in the spectrum of lightning, so that it is not *quite* certain that this line in the meteor-spectrum is due to the presence of sodium in the chemical composition of meteors. However, it cannot but be considered as highly improbable that any traces of sodium exist in the atmosphere at the great height at which meteors travel; still less probable is it that such considerable quantities of sodium exist as would account for the strongly-marked character of the yellow line shown in meteor-spectra. Mr. Herschel notes especially of those trains which fade most slowly that they consist of *nothing else but soda-flames* during the latter portion of the time that they continue visible. "Their condition is then exactly that of the flame of a spirit-lamp, newly trimmed, and largely dosed with a supply of moistened salt."

One of the most remarkable facts which observation has revealed respecting shooting-stars, is the recurrence of star-showers of greater or less intensity on certain days of the year. It was observed long ago that on the nights of August 9-11 stars fell in much greater numbers than usual. For instance, there is a legend in parts of Thessaly, that near the time of the festival of St. Laurence, the heavens open and exhibit shining lights (*κανέψια*); and in an ancient English church calendar, the August star-showers are described as "fiery tears." We find the 10th of August also characterized by the word *meteorodes*, in a MS. called *Ephemerides rerum naturalium*, preserved in Christ's College, Cambridge. The great November shower was not recognized so soon. This shower is characterized by an alternate increase and decrease of intensity, the interval between successive maxima being thirty-three or thirty-four years. For several years before and after the true year of maximum intensity the shower is in general distinctly exhibited. Our readers will not need to be reminded of the recurrence of this shower last November, as predicted by astronomers. Last year was spoken of in these predictions as the year in which the November shower would exhibit its maximum of splendour. Our own opinion is that 1867 will turn out to be the true year of maximum intensity, and that fine showers will be seen during the

years 1868 and 1869. Whether, however, such showers, should they occur, will be as well seen in England as that of November 13th last, is problematical, since it has frequently happened that magnificent showers are seen in certain longitudes, and but a moderate display in others. Besides the August and November showers, there are the showers of October 16-28, of December 6-18, of April 9-10, of July 25-30, and others. There are in fact no less than "fifty-six recognized star-showers, as well determined in the majority of cases as are the older and better known showers of August and November." While on this point, we may note, as evidence, that aërolites have their favourite seasons for visiting the earth, that of the twenty which are known to have fallen on the British Isles three fell on May 17-18, four on August 4-9, two on July 3-4, and two on April 1-5. Of the other nine, three are undated.

Another singular law has been detected in the motions of shooting-stars which appear at the same season. It is found that when their paths are produced backwards they pass through or near one point on the celestial sphere,* and that this point has no fixed relation to the horizon of the observer, but is fixed among the stars. Sometimes the shooting-stars which appear on the same night may be divided into two sets, each having a distinct radiant point,—as astronomers have named these centres of divergence. Each of the fifty-six star-showers spoken of above has its radiant point. Humboldt states that the radiant points of the November and August showers are those points precisely towards which the earth is travelling at those seasons respectively. He has been followed in this statement by many writers on astronomy. But the statement is not true. In fact, these radiant points do not lie on the ecliptic, whereas the point towards which the earth is travelling at any moment, necessarily lies upon the ecliptic.

Aërolites have been analysed, and it is found that they contain many elements known on earth. These usually appear combined in the following types:—metallic iron, magnetic iron, sulphuret of iron, oxide of tin, silicates, olivine, &c. In one aërolite only, namely, in a stone which fell on April 15th, 1857, near Kaba-Debreczin—"a small quantity of organic matter akin to parafine" has been detected,—a very noteworthy circumstance. It is also remarkable that no new element, and only one or two new compounds (compounds, at least, which have not yet been recognized among terrestrial formations) have ever been detected in meteorites.

The microscopical examination of aërolites has also revealed much that is interesting and instructive. The crystals of the mixed minerals which appear in aërolites are found to differ in some important respects from those of volcanic rocks, "but their consolidation must have taken place from fusion in masses of mountain size." The alloy of metallic

* The Greeks had already noted something of this sort, which they attributed to the prevalence of strong winds in the upper regions of the air.

iron and nickel which is a principal component of meteorites is often found to be as regularly crystallized as a mass of spar.

M. Daubrée has attempted to produce artificial meteorites by combining together suitable elements and compounds. In doing so he has discovered a very singular fact. The crystals he obtained resembled the long needles which are seen to form on water when it is *slowly frozen* ; whereas the black crystalline crust with which all meteorites are covered has a granular structure resembling snow or hoar-frost, which we know to be formed by the *sudden* passage of water from the vaporous to the solid state. This phenomenon shows that meteoric masses have been subjected to actions altogether different to those which the chemist is able to bring into operation.

The result of the series of observations which we have here recorded is that we are able to attempt the formation of a theory of shooting-stars with some confidence. And, in the first place, we are able to reject decisively certain theories which have found favour at different times.

The immense height at which shooting-stars appear enables us to reject the atmospheric origin which has been suggested, for we have every reason for supposing that the air at a height of seventy miles above the earth is of extreme tenuity, and therefore quite incapable of supporting in sufficient quantity those vapours from which shooting-stars, on this theory, are assumed to be generated.

Two other theories, which have not hitherto been mentioned, are also overthrown by the results of modern observation. Both may be called *volcanic*, but one assumes that shooting-stars are bodies which have been projected from volcanoes on the earth, while the other assumes that they have come from volcanoes on the moon. Observation has shown that when Mount Etna is in full activity, the masses of stone thrown from its crater have a velocity of less than 1,600 feet per second, which is but one-112th part of the mean velocity with which shooting-stars are observed to move. The theory that falling-stars come from the moon was first propounded by Terzago, an Italian, in the seventeenth century. It appears, however, to have been not unknown in ancient times, since we learn that the Syrian astronomers were in the habit of looking for shooting-stars when the moon was full ; while Greek astronomers considered the most favourable season to be at the time of lunar eclipse, that is when the moon is full but the sky dark. Bizarre as it may seem, this fanciful explanation has been thought worthy of strict mathematical examination by such astronomers as Laplace, Olbers, and Poisson. It appears, from their calculations, that the velocity with which stone-showers should be propelled from the moon in order to reach our earth with the velocities observed among shooting-stars may be considered to be utterly beyond the powers we could concede to lunar volcanoes, even if it were proved (which is far from being the case) that any active volcanoes now exist on the moon's surface.

The three theories just considered have been effectually overthrown by the simple observation of the height and velocities of shooting-stars. When we add to this consideration the recurrence of star-showers, not in particular states of the earth's atmosphere, not connected in any way with the activity of terrestrial volcanoes, nor conceivably with the action of assumed lunar volcanoes, these theories appear yet more inadequate to explain observed phenomena. The phenomenon of radiant points, lastly, is so wholly inexplicable on any of these theories, that we may dismiss them finally, as utterly untenable.

We must, therefore, turn to the theory which had already been suggested by Greek philosophers—that shooting-stars and meteors are extraneous bodies dragged towards the earth by the force of her attractive influence. But modern scientific discoveries enable us to exhibit this theory in a more inviting form, and at the same time to offer analogues obviously tending to confirm the hypothesis. The discovery of a zone of planetoids, the inquiry into the nature of the zodiacal light, and the mathematical examination of the "stability" of the Saturnian ring-system, have led astronomers to recognize the existence in the solar system of minute bodies travelling in zones or clusters around a central orb. There is, therefore, nothing unreasonable in the supposition that there are zones and clusters of such bodies travelling round the sun in orbits which intersect the earth's path. When in her course around the sun she encounters any of the bodies forming such zones and clusters, they are ignited by friction as they pass through the upper layers of the air, and become visible as shooting-stars or meteors according to their dimensions; or they may even fall upon her surface as aérolites.

The recurrence of star-showers is a necessary consequence of the hypothesis we are considering. For, if we suppose the zones of meteors, or the orbits of meteor-clusters, to have a fixed position in the solar system, or to be subject to those slow progressive or retrogressive shifting with which the study of the solar system familiarizes us, there will necessarily result a regular recurrence of showers either on fixed days, or on days uniformly shifting round among the seasons. This is precisely what is observed with the fifty-six recognized star-showers.

The earth does not necessarily (or probably) pass centrally through a meteor-cluster every year, nor probably are the meteor-zones uniformly rich throughout. Thus we can readily understand periodic undulations in the intensity of star-showers, or even periodic intermittances.

The phenomenon of radiant points also is not merely reconcilable with, but obviously indicates the hypothesis we are considering. For during the brief interval occupied by the earth in passing through a well-marked zone or cluster, the bodies composing such zone or cluster may be considered to be moving (relatively to the moving earth) in parallel lines. Therefore by a well-known law in perspective their apparent paths, viewed from the earth, must have a "vanishing point"

on the celestial sphere,—that is, a “radian point” among the fixed stars.

The remarkable velocity with which shooting-stars travel is satisfactorily accounted for by the modern theory. If we suppose zones and clusters of cosmical bodies (pocket-planets we may term them with Humboldt) to be travelling in different directions around the sun, it is clear that the members of those zones which travel in the same direction as the earth, will overtake, or be overtaken by her, with the *difference* of their respective velocities, while those which travel in the contrary direction will encounter the earth with the *sum* of their own and the earth’s velocity. Now, just as, in walking along a crowded road, we *meet* many more people than we overtake, or are overtaken by; so, clearly, by far the larger number of observed shooting-stars must belong to the latter class named above, and therefore the average observed velocity will not fall very far short of the sum of the velocities of the earth and the shooting-star system.

Fairly considered, the modern theory may be looked upon as established; for, first, all other available hypotheses have been shown to be untenable; and, secondly, the most remarkable shooting-star phenomena are shown to be consistent with, or rather to point directly to, the modern hypothesis. It remains only that some minor peculiarities should be noticed.

It has been remarked that shooting-stars are much more commonly seen in the months from July to December, than in those from January to June. Remembering that this remark refers to observations made in our northern hemisphere, it is easily reconciled with the modern theory, when we consider that the north pole is on the *forward hemisphere* of the earth (considered with reference to her orbital motion) during the first-named period, and on the *rear* (or *sheltered*) *hemisphere* during the second.

Again, it has been remarked that shooting-stars are seen more commonly in the hours after midnight, and that aërolites fall more commonly before noon. In other words, these extraneous bodies reach the earth (or her atmosphere) more frequently in the hours from midnight to noon than in those from noon to midnight. Humboldt suggests in explanation we know not what theory of variation in the ignition-powers of different hours. But it is clear that the true explanation is founded on the principle presented in the preceding paragraph, since the *forward hemisphere* contains places whose local time lies, roughly speaking, between midnight and noon, while places whose local hour lies between noon and midnight lie on the *sheltered hemisphere*.

If we remember that the earth is but a point in space, we may fairly conclude that the number of bodies composing meteor-zones is all but infinite. Large, therefore, as the numbers of these bodies which fall on the earth may be, there is no reason to suppose (perhaps if we knew the

true functions of these bodies, we might say—there is no reason to fear) that the supply of meteors will ever be perceptibly diminished. Although the contrary opinion is often expressed, it is demonstrable that a very small proportion only of the shooting-stars which become visible to us, can escape from the earth's atmosphere. The result is of course that they must reach the earth, probably in a dispersed and divided state. It seems to us indeed not wholly improbable that some of those elements which the lightning-spectrum shows to exist in the atmosphere, may be due to the perpetual dissipation and precipitation of the substance of shooting-stars.

The remarkable discovery lately made, that the great November star-stream travels in the track of a telescopic comet (whose period is 33½ years), that the August stream, in like manner, follows the track of the great comet of 1862 (whose period is 142 years), and that other noted shooting-star systems show a similar relation to the paths of other comets, opens out the most startling views of the manner in which cosmical space—or at least that part of space over which the sun's attractive power bears sway—is occupied by myriads on myriads of bodies more or less minute. If those comets—not one in fifty even of discovered comets—whose orbits approach that of the earth, are attended by such important streams of cosmic matter: if, for instance, the minute telescopic comet (known as I., 1866), in whose track the November meteors travel, is attended by a train capable of producing magnificent star-showers for nine hundred centuries—what multitudes of minute planets must be supposed to exist in the complete cometary system! This discovery has been made too recently, however (though it appears to be thoroughly established), to admit of our here discussing in full the results which seem to flow from it.

Jottings from the Note-Book of an Undeveloped Collector.

PART III.

WHEN Ælian tells us that even the poorest of the people of Cyrene wore rings worth 10 minæ (something over 40*l.* a piece), we may suppose him, without any great incivility, to be using a figure of speech. There is, however, no doubt that the wearing of rings was much more common with the ancients than with ourselves. In those days when writing was as rare an accomplishment as it was in England before Richard II., when even kings could do no more than affix their "mark," they were worn not so much for ornament as for use: they served the purposes of a seal. Among the Greeks every freeman had his ring, whilst there were some lazy long-haired onyx-ring-wearers, as Aristophanes calls them, who seem to have been almost as demented as Pope Paul II., who, Mr. King says, died (some, however, tell us a very different story) of a chill caught from the number of rings with which he had loaded his fingers. Martial declares that one gentleman of his acquaintance wore as many as sixty; and Juvenal tells us of some dandies who had two sets of rings, one for summer, the other for winter use.

Spartan rings were of iron. Amongst the Romans also this was, at first, the usual metal employed; and some men who kept up or aped the ancient simplicity never used any more precious metal.

The right of wearing *gold* rings was only given in the early days of the Republic to ambassadors, and then they were only worn on state occasions. Afterwards the privilege was extended to members of the senate, magistrates, and knights. The emperors were not so particular. Severus and Aurelian gave permission to Roman soldiers to wear them, and finally Justinian extended it to all citizens.

No mention of rings is made in Homer, although the art of engraving gems had reached no slight degree of excellence in the East many centuries before his time. The Chaldean and Assyrian signets were cylinders of various metals and precious stones, such as lapis-lazuli, amethyst, quartz, hematite, &c., varying in size from three inches to a quarter of an inch in length. The most ancient known signet has unfortunately been lost. It was found by Sir R. Ker Porter, and he has luckily given us an engraving of it in his *Travels*. From the inscription upon it—in very ancient cuneiform characters—we find that it belonged to Urukh or Urkham (Orchamus, as Ovid calls him in the *Metamorphoses*), who founded the most ancient of the buildings at Mugheir, Warka, Senkareh, and Niffer. "There can be little doubt,"

Professor Rawlinson tells us, "that he stands at the head of the present series of monumental kings, one of whom certainly reigned as early as B.C. 1860. If we may trust the statement of Ovid that he was the seventh monarch of his dynasty, we are entitled to place his reign in the twenty-first century before our era, from about B.C. 2098 to B.C. 2070." Of the cylinder itself "it is possible that the artist employed by Sir R. Porter has given a flattering representation of his original; otherwise the conclusion must be that both mechanical and artistic skill had reached a very surprising degree of excellence at the most remote period to which Chaldaean records carry us back." Another Chaldaean signet, found at Baghdad, belonged to Durri-galazu, who reigned about B.C. 1600.

Besides cylinders there have been found impressions from seals that must have been like ordinary gems in rings, round or oval. One most interesting example is in the British Museum. On a piece of clay, appended, probably, to some treaty of peace, are two impressions of seals, one of which certainly is that of Sabaco, the *Æthiopian*—the So, probably, mentioned in the Second Book of Kings—and the other most likely that of Sennacherib. In the same collection is the cylinder of that king. He is represented adoring a winged figure in a circle. Before him is the Sacred Tree and an eunuch, the rest of the cylinder being occupied with a flower resembling the lotus, upon which is standing an ibex or wild goat. Mr. King tells us in his valuable book on ancient gems that the material of the cylinder is translucent green felspar or amazon-stone, one of the hardest substances known to the lapidary. The special excellence of the gem is the fineness and distinctness of the execution. "The details are so minute that a magnifying glass is almost required to perceive them."

The Museum collection contains also the signet of Darius, though to which of the Persian monarchs of that name it is to be assigned it is impossible to say. The finest known Etruscan ring—the Canino one—is in the same collection. Alexander the Great was very particular about his signet rings; as he would allow no one but Apelles to paint him, no one but Lysippus to make his statue, so he would allow no one but Pyrgoteles to engrave his signets. Apparently the stone employed was the emerald.

When Marcellus had fallen into the ambuscade which Hannibal laid for him near Venusium, the Carthaginian having got possession of his signet, made good use of it by attaching it to some forged letters. Mr. King thinks that a ring still in existence may be this identical ring. Another may have belonged to that princely patron of literature, Mæcenas, —it certainly belongs to his clan; and another to that accomplished scoundrel and plunderer of Sicily, Verres. Of later times, we have the ring of the first of the barbarian chiefs who entered and sacked the city of Rome—a curious carnelian, inscribed "Alarius rex Gothorum;" and there was at Paris—but it has been stolen—the signet found on opening the tomb of the Merovingian king, Childeric, at Tournay, in 1654.

The signet of Michel Angelo, now at Paris, was formerly believed to be the work of Pyrgoteles, and the design upon it the birth of Alexander. It was accordingly valued at 2,000*l.* It is really an Italian work by P. M. da Peschia, the intimate friend of the great painter. Mr. King gives an amusing incident connected with this ring from *Brosset's Letters on Italy*. "Early in the century, as the academician, J. Harduin, was exhibiting the treasures of the Bibliothèque to that celebrated amateur, the Baron de Stosch, he all at once missed this very ring; whereupon, without expressing his suspicions, he privately despatched a servant for a strong emetic, which, when brought, he insisted upon the baron's swallowing then and there. In a few minutes he had the satisfaction of hearing the ring tinkle into the basin held before the unlucky and unscrupulous gem-collector."

One of the most famous rings in English history was that given by Queen Elizabeth to her favourite, the Earl of Essex. Everybody remembers how Essex entrusted this ring, which the Queen had told him would ensure his pardon if he ever fell into disgrace, to the Countess of Nottingham, who confessed, on her death-bed, that she had purposely failed to deliver it. This ring is now in the possession of Lord John Thynne. It is a fine sardonyx, containing an exquisitely engraved bust of the Queen.

Though our National Collection falls far short of some of the Continental ones in the number of engraved Gems, still it contains some very fine specimens, the extent and value of which has been considerably increased by the recent acquisition of the famous Blacas collection. It contains also, I believe, a smaller quantity of forgeries than any of the Continental collections. Very luckily, as I shall show presently, it refused to have anything to do with the Poniatowski gems, when their purchase was pressed upon the authorities.

Many gems had, in the Middle Ages, a very fictitious value from the traditional history connected with them. In the Trésor de S. Denys was a gem with the inscription, "Hic lapis fuit Davidis regis et prophete." It is not a precious stone at all, but a lump of antique schmelze paste. The Imperial Cabinet at St. Petersburg has the ring that was formerly believed to be the espousal ring of the Virgin Mary, with portraits of herself and Joseph. They are really portraits of two freedmen, Alpheus and Aretho, as the inscription informs us. The agate of St. Capelle, Paris—with the exception of the Campagna in the Vatican, the largest cameo known—was imagined to represent the triumph of Joseph in Egypt. It was pawned on one occasion to St. Louis, by Baldwin, the last Frankish Emperor of Constantinople, with some other reliques, for 10,000 marks of silver. It really represents the return of Germanicus from his German campaign, and his adoption by Tiberius and Livia. The "emerald of the Vatican" was held to be a portrait of Christ, taken by order of Pilate, and by him presented to Tiberius. Afterwards it is said to have been

given by the Sultan Bajazet to Pope Innocent VIII., as a ransom for his brother, who had fallen into the Pope's hands. It is really of the Italian revival period, the face being a copy of the head of the Saviour in Raffaelle's cartoon of the "Miraculous Draught of Fishes." The apotheosis of Germanicus, in the French collection, was long considered to be the portrait of St. John the Evangelist. When Bishop Humbert returned from Constantinople, where he had been sent in 1049, by Pope Leo IX., he brought back this fine cameo and presented it to the monks of Evre de Toul. Louis XIV. begged it from the monks, making them in return a present of 7,000 crowns.

In 1855 the British Museum obtained at the Bernal sale a most interesting example of very early mediaeval art. It was the "morse," or brooch, which from time immemorial had served to fasten the robes of the Abbot of Vézor on the Meuse, when in full pontificals. It is a circular piece of crystal, on which is represented the history of Susanna and the Elders. In the centre is the inscription, "Lotharius rex Franc. fieri jussit." Mr. Bernal purchased it for 10*l.* : at his sale the British Museum outbid Lord Londesborough, and secured it for 26*l.*

Mr. King gives us some startling instances of the prices at which gems have been sold. "Gem collections had now (eighteenth century) grown into a perfect mania with the noble and the rich; the first great impetus being imparted by the arch-charlatan, Baron Stosch (a Hanoverian spy over the Pretender's motions), by the formation of his enormous cabinet, and its illustration by the labours of the erudite Winckelmann, with its final purchase at the enormous price of 30,000 ducats, by the reputed model of the prince-philosopher, Frederick of Prussia. The Duc d'Orléans, grandson of the Regent, followed his example. Our own Dukes of Devonshire and Marlborough were, concurrently with the French prince, zealously at work in forming their present magnificent cabinets, paying incredible sums for gems of any celebrity. The former acquired from Stosch, for the equivalent of 1,000*l.*, the cow of Apollonides, and from Sevin at Paris, at the same rate, the Diomed with the Palladium. The latter nobleman, says La Chaux, purchased from Zanetti of Venice (1763) four gems for the sum of 1,200*l.* : they are the Phocion of Alessandro il Greco, the Horatius Cocles (a miniature cinquecento cameo), the Antinous, and the Matidea—all still adorning the cabinet at Blenheim. The large cameo of Vespasian cost the same amateur (according to Raspe) 300 guineas. The same portrait in cameo, but re-styled a Meccenas, cost Mr. Yorke 250 guineas. The fine intaglio, Hercules and the Dying Amazon, was bought by Mr. Boyd for 300*l.* : and to conclude this list of extravagances, the Hercules and Lion intaglio on sardonyx, in its antique silver mounting (found at Aleppo), was considered cheap by Mr. Locke at the figure of 200 guineas."

But royal personages long ago would have thought little of such prices as these, if we are to believe that the rings of Faustina and Domitia cost respectively what would be in our money 40,000*l.* and 60,000*l.* A former

Elector of Mayence is said to have offered the whole village of Anemöneburg for a cameo formerly in the shrine constructed at Marburg to contain the bones of the saintly Elizabeth of Thüringen: and Rudolf II. gave 12,000 gold ducats for the famous "Gemma Augustea," now at Vienna. It is superior in point of art to the Paris cameo already mentioned, but falls short in point of size, being 9 inches by 8, whilst the Paris one measures 13 by 11. The Campeagna is 16 by 12.

The excessive prices gems used to fetch gave rise of course to numberless forgeries. An amusing story is told of how Payne Knight, the great connoisseur in that branch of art, was taken in. He was one day exhibiting his collection to a foreigner, and had nearly displayed all his treasures, when he opened a drawer and said, "Now, sir, let me show you one of the gems of my collection." "I am sorry to have to tell you," said his visitor, "that I engraved that gem myself." It was Pistruchi, afterwards engraver to the English Mint. The gem was the Flora, now in the British Museum; in the opinion of Mr. King, it is but a poor performance. It was the same artist's Greek hero on horseback which, after some little alterations had been made in it, was chosen by Lord Maryborough to represent St. George, on the reverse of the sovereign of 1816. Pistruchi must have found gem-cutting a very profitable employment, if it be true that he got as much as 800*l.* for a single cameo.

The most gigantic fraud ever perpetrated was the Poniatowski gems—3,000 in number—which were all forgeries. The British Museum luckily declined to purchase them when they were offered for sale. So highly were they esteemed at one period that a gentleman who had got 1,200 of them, actually refused 60,000*l.* for his treasures. But at Lord Monson's sale in 1854, though some of the choicest specimens were put up, they fetched no more, gold-setting and all, than from 25 to 30 shillings each. The prince had inherited a genuine collection from his uncle Stanislaus, the last King of Poland. When these were sold in 1839 the gems had got such a bad name that the masterpiece of Dioscorides, Io, instead of fetching, as it would have fetched some time before, 1,000 guineas, was actually knocked down for 17*l.* It was bought by Mr. Cowie, who, though an Englishman, left it, I regret to add, with his other collection, to the Florence Gallery.

We have but to glance at the collection of casts displayed in the South Kensington Museum to be aware how very unimportant as yet is the national collection of Ivories, whether there or at the British Museum. But in the latter museum are some fine and valuable ivories, derived principally from the Maskell collection. Their oldest, and in one way most interesting specimens were brought from Nineveh by Mr. Layard. The influence of Egyptian art is very plainly to be seen in them, but one cannot help being surprised at the expression the artists have put into some of their figures, notwithstanding that the general drawing is deficient in freedom.

But the Museum cases would have been more worthily filled if the authorities had taken advantage of the rare opportunity which presented itself in 1855, when the Féjerváry Collection was offered to them. Some most precious examples were contained in it. When the purchase had been declined by the trustees, it was secured by Mr. Joseph Mayer, of Liverpool, who has generously transferred it with the rest of his choice museum to the Brown Free Library, at Liverpool. There too, thanks to the same munificent donor, is the Faussett Collection of Anglo-Saxon antiquities, which the British Museum refused to purchase in 1854. It is almost, if not quite, the most authentic and valuable collection in existence, and contains, with very few exceptions, specimens (some of them very beautiful) of every known article ever found in Anglo-Saxon graves. Mr. Wylie would have added to it his collection of objects from Fairford—all the antiquarian societies in the kingdom exerted themselves in the matter—it was only a question of some 600*l.* or 700*l.*—but the trustees in their wisdom decided that it could find no place in the Museum.

Of more modern ivories, by far the most important are the Diptychs—a pair of tablets, like the cover of a book, with wax on the inner surface for writing on. Of one species, the “mythological”—of which no more than half-a-dozen specimens, if so many, are known—a very fine one, which has been engraved by Raphael Morghen, is in the Féjerváry collection. It was executed in the second century. On one tablet is Æsculapius and Telephorus; on the other Hygeia and Cupid: each figure being seven inches high, and beautifully carved. The same collection has a specimen of another kind, the “imperial,” also of extreme rarity. This diptych is supposed to be that of the Emperor Philip the Arab (A. D. 248). Other diptychs were consular. Under the empire it was the custom for consuls, and other of the chief magistrates, on the day upon which they entered on their office, to make presents to their friends of diptychs inscribed with their names and containing their portraits. Though consuls only were allowed to have them in ivory, we find, from the letters of Q. Aurelius Symmachus, that the law was not strictly observed: for in the case of his son ivory diptychs were distributed, though he was only a quæstor. One of these consular diptychs in the Féjerváry collection is that of Constantinus, Consul of the East (A. D. 513). He holds the “mappa circensis,” the throwing down of which was the signal for commencing the games. Underneath are persons distributing diptychs, purses, &c. In another the name of the consul has been removed and that of Bishop Baldric, who accompanied Godfrey of Bouillon to the Holy Land, put in its stead. Some idea of the value of this collection may be formed from the fact that when the Arundel Society published a select series of ivories from various collections, the Féjerváry supplied no less than ten specimens. The Bibliothèque Impérial of Paris supplied eleven, and the Berlin Museum the same number.

One or two fine diptychs are in the British Museum, and at South

Kensington is a leaf of the Diptychon Meleretense, of 4th-century work, and formerly in the convent at Moutiers, in France. It belonged to the family of Symmachus, and was bought for 420*l.* Another very beautiful diptych, of Byzantine work, belonged to Rufinus Gennadius Probus Orestes, Consul of the East under Justinian, A.D. 521. It was purchased for 620*l.* Other diptychs were ecclesiastical; some of them containing the names of living patriarchs and bishops of important sees; others of those who had died in the peace and communion of the church. One very fine one of this kind was formerly in the treasury of the Cathedral of Soissons. The subjects represented are the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, and the descent of the Holy Ghost. It is a little more than a foot in height, and its date about the end of the 13th century. It cost 308*l.* Of other ecclesiastical ivories I may mention three Triptychs; one of Italian work of the 14th century, purchased for 350*l.*; another of German work of the same date, for 448*l.*; and the third French, of the latter half of the 15th century, for 210*l.* Another very important triptych, by Andrea Pisano, came from the Campana collection. Besides these is a beautiful book cover of German work, of the 7th or 8th century, fifteen inches by eleven, which cost 588*l.* And, lastly, there are two heads of crosiers, one 4*1*/*2* inches long, for which 140*l.* was paid; the other 6*1*/*2*, which cost 168*l.* Many of the prices given for these and similar objects by the Museum may seem excessive, but if we have waited till the market-prices were exorbitant, we have only ourselves to blame. And good prices must be given, if we want to secure any thing worth having, when we have such competitors as the Louvre, which can acquire the Campana Museum—exclusive of one very valuable portion, which was secured for South Kensington—for 4,800,000 francs; and is not ashamed to purchase, at the Soltikoff sale, for 32,000 francs, a diptych that had been offered to it only five or six years before for 4,500.

Whether Herodotus is right in attributing the invention of coined money to the Lydians, is perhaps somewhat open to question. It is, however, very remarkable that the ancient Assyrians and Egyptians, with all their wonderful advance in civilization, should never have invented anything better than lumps and bars of metal as a medium for exchange. The earliest money mentioned in the Bible—as, for instance, that carried by Joseph's brethren into Egypt—was “in weight.” The first Hebrew coinage is no older than the Maccabees. The first Egyptian began with the successors of Alexander. Examples of Lydian coins have come down to us, but as they have no inscriptions their dates can only be guessed at. Some of them are of the rudest description, being merely a lump of electrum—three parts gold to one of silver—upon one surface of which was impressed a lion's head or other device—the other surface, like that of the old silver coins of Ægina, being merely flattened by the block upon which the metal was struck. A method, equally simple, is

mentioned in the *Asiatic Transactions* as having been lately practised in India. "A piece of mango-tree, about four feet in length, was half-buried in the ground, in the middle of which was inserted a die: upon the die was placed a circular piece of gold, and over that another die. The upper die was then struck with a sledge hammer, and the mohur dropped on one side complete."

We find curious peculiarities now and then about some ancient coins—as for example, those of M. Mæcius Tullus, triumvir of the mint under Augustus, which have a superscription on the reverse and nothing more, and one still more strange bronze medal of Nemausus (Nismes), known by the name of the Pied de Biche, from the extraordinary projection it has from the lower part of it. There is in the British Museum a coin of Attalus, who was for one year Emperor of the West, which is remarkable as the heaviest silver coin known; it weighs $2\frac{1}{2}$ ounces. The Roman copper coins, the asses, were originally much heavier than this, weighing in fact 12 ounces (the coins of Adria in the Abruzzi were heavier still), but in the time of the first Punic war the asses, though the nominal value remained the same, were reduced in weight to a couple of ounces, and so paid off the national debt. Pausanias, one of the Macedonian Kings, practised another device. His silver coins were only plated copper: just as much a cheat as the "black money" coined by French nobles some 600 years ago, or the base coinage of our own Queen Mary.

"Necessity is the mother of invention." So it proved in the civil wars when Charles had to issue "siege pieces," which were nothing more than portions of cups or salvers, with the chasing sometimes still visible. The money of James II. coined just before the battle of the Boyne, got its name, "gun money," from the substance of which it was mostly composed, old brass guns. Pieces not worth intrinsically more than a halfpenny or a penny were made to pass as shillings and half-crowns.

The first coins to which a date can be positively given are those of Alexander I. of Macedonia. It is not, however, till the time of Philip II. that the Macedonian coins approach that degree of beauty and artistic skill for which they are so famous. He issued a large coinage which was very extensively circulated throughout Greece, and we have a very curious proof of its still wider diffusion.

Among the ancient Helvetii, the money most in circulation seems to have been a quarter-stater of gold—a bad imitation of this very Macedonian coinage. It has upon it some letters which no doubt are intended for ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ. The use of Greek letters, however, in Helvetia is mentioned by Cæsar. The gold of these coins was collected, as Dr. Keller tells us in his very interesting work on the Lake Dwellings of Switzerland, in the Aar and its tributaries, and the money coined at Aventicum, the modern Avenches, in the Pays de Vaud.

There is however a still more remarkable instance of such imitation. In the year 1783 there was discovered, about ten miles from Calcutta, a quantity of money which had been coined by Chandra, a king of upper

and central India, in the 6th century A.D. These pieces were declared by Payne Knight to have been attempts at imitating some coinage of Greece.

It would be impossible within any reasonable limit to give an account of the coins that are remarkable either for their beauty, such as those of the cities of Sicily, &c., or their rarity. An example or two must suffice. One very exquisite instance is the tetradrachm of Syracuse with the head of the nymph Arethusa. The artist, Cimon, has put his name on the coin—a very unusual proceeding. Lord Northwick's specimen sold for 60 guineas. Another is that of Lysimachus, one of Alexander's generals, with a head of his master—a perfect gem; another a coin of Magnesia ad Maeandrum, with a draped statæ of Diana on the obverse, and on the reverse a naked statue of Apollo—a fine example of which brought 265*l.* at the Northwick sale: one of Samos which Mionnet calls one of the most beautiful coins he ever saw—on it is the infant Hercules; it brought 100*l.* at the same sale; and two of the city of Thurii with the head of Pallas on the obverse, of wonderful beauty.

The number and variety of ancient coins is almost incredible. Mionnet gives us a list of no less than three hundred kings and one thousand cities, and to one of these latter—Tarentum—there are assigned no less than five hundred distinct types. One curious, and at first sight, inexplicable circumstance is that, whereas the coins of such an out-of-the-way place as Tyras at the mouth of the Dneister are remarkable for their beauty, those of Athens are so rude and unartistic. "The true cause was commercial policy. The reputation of the Athenian tetradrachm stood high in the commercial world, and its circulation, like that of the Venetian sequin and the Spanish dollar in modern times, was almost universal. Even now it is found in some of the most distant parts of the map. The Athenians abstained from any improvement upon the ancient type, fearing lest the confidence of foreigners in the purity and weight of the coin should be lessened thereby. So in China and the east during the late war, Spanish *pillar* dollars were current, but those of Ferdinand VII. and King Joseph, coined without the pillars, were refused. The Venetian ducat and the Maria Theresa dollar continued to be struck in Italy, for foreign circulation, long after the extinction of the Republic and the death of that Empress. The old Athenian coinage enjoyed the same pre-eminence."

Some coins are very interesting as bearing portraits of famous historical personages. Alexander the Great has been mentioned already; then we have Hannibal's friend, Mithridates: a gold coin of his, for which Mr. Edmonds had given 115*l.* in 1838, was secured in 1854 by General Fox for his fine collection for 60*l.* Then there is an unique medal of Commodus, with the figure of Britannia (the present figure on our copper coinage is said to have been taken from the Duchess of Richmond when halfpennies and farthings were first issued in the time of Charles II.), which the British Museum purchased for 75*l.*; and more than all, the tetradrachm of that

marvellous woman, Cleopatra. The British Museum secured a specimen at the Northwick sale for 240*l.*

Among English coins are some that fetch very large prices. A gold penny of Henry III., for instance, sold in 1859, for 130*l.*; a quarter florin of Edward III., almost unique, for 145*l.*; and a crown piece of Henry VIII., at Mr. Cuff's sale in 1854, brought 140*l.* Probably the largest price ever paid for an English coin was at the same sale for the 5*l.* piece presented by Charles I. on the scaffold to Bishop Juxon, bearing the motto "Florent concordia regna." It was a pattern piece never published. From the bishop it passed through various hands, till it was purchased from Lieutenant-Colonel Drummond, by Mr. Till, the coin-dealer, for 50*l.* He offered it to the British Museum for 80*l.*, but the purchase was declined, and finally Mr. Cuff became the possessor at 60*l.* At his sale it brought 200*l.*; the purchaser being Mr. Brown, one of the partners of the house of Longmans.

Another very interesting piece is the "petition crown" of Thomas Simon. Jealous that all the dies of the English mint were being engraved by foreigners, he executed this piece to show Charles II. that native artists could do the work quite as well. On the obverse is the king's head crowned with laurel—on the reverse, a small figure of St. George on horseback, surrounded with the garter and motto "Honi soit qui mal-y-pense," outside which are the four escutcheons of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, with two C's interlaced at the angles. The inscription is "Mag. Brit. Fr. et Hib. Rex. 1663;" on the edge "Reddite qua Cæsaris Cæsari," &c. Dr. Waagen tells us, that Mr. Bale gave 154*l.* for his specimen; Sir W. Baynes's, last August, brought 36*l.* 10*s.*

About one English coin there exists a very singular delusion—Queen Anne's farthing. Often and often have the officers of the British Museum received letters asking whether, as the writer was in possession of the *third* of the farthings, of which the Museum had the other two, he was not entitled to some 1,000*l.* or so; and grievous no doubt has been his disappointment at being told that his fancied treasure might possibly be worth some four or five shillings. How the delusion ever originated, it is impossible to say; but one account tells us that a lady in Yorkshire, having lost one of these farthings, which she valued as the bequest of a dear friend, offered a very large sum for its recovery, and this gave rise to a false impression of the value of any specimen. It is commonly believed that only three examples of the farthings were struck off, because it was found that there was a flaw near the bridge of the Queen's nose; another account says the die broke in two. There are really no less than five or six different patterns of the farthing, but most of them were struck for approval only and never issued. The genuine farthing has the inscription "Anna Dei gratia," surrounding the Queen's bust; on the reverse the figure of, and the inscription, "Britannia." It is dated 1714. Another, which was also perhaps in circulation, exactly resembles the one just mentioned, but has the date 1718. They have broad milled edges, like the

farthings of George III. Of the patterns, the rarest seems to be one like the genuine farthing, but with the inscription "Anna Regina." In 1823 there was a trial at Dublin about a Queen Anne's farthing, which it was stated had actually been sold for 800*l.*

The British Museum collection of coins is already taking nearly, if not quite, the foremost place of all such collections. It is no wonder, however, that its treasures should multiply, when we can point to such instances of liberality as that of Mr. Wigan, of Highbury Terrace, who a few years since allowed the officers of the Museum to take any specimens they pleased from his collection of Roman gold coins. They took 200—many of them unique, all of the greatest rarity and beauty. They were valued at 3,000*l.* How much more noble than that narrow-minded liberality, that will not let its treasures mix with those of its neighbours, but must have rooms, cabinets, and special curators, for its display and glorification.

As might be naturally expected, forgeries in coins are by no means rare. Many of these are clumsy enough, but there are two exceptions that must be mentioned. Two men, John Carino and Alexander Bassiano, both of Padua, produced more than 100 medals and coins; some of them imitations of antiques, others pure fabrications. These "Paduans," as they are called, are beautifully executed, and are in great request as tests. But the greatest forger was Becker, who died at Frankfort in 1830. He produced nearly 350 forgeries, some of which he contrived to have "found," like Dousterswivel and Simonides, in places where he had hidden them.

Besides the interest coins have, either from their rarity or their beauty, they have now and then no small degree of historical value and importance. One instance will be familiar no doubt to many. In the account of Philippi given in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke caused no small difficulty by describing it as a colony. From coins, however, as well as from inscriptions, we find that the sacred historian was right, and that Augustus gave it the privilege of a colony, with the name, "Colonia Julia Augusta Philippensis."

The art of Glass-making is of very high antiquity. The oldest known specimen of *transparent* glass is a bottle about 3*1/4* inches high, discovered by Mr. Layard in the ruins of the N.W. palace at Nineveh, and now in the British Museum. It was blown in one solid piece, and then hollowed out by a machine. It has engraved upon it the name and title of Sargon, accompanied with the figure of a lion. Its date, therefore, is the latter part of the seventh century B.C. The art, however, had been practised in Egypt many centuries before this. There was discovered at Thebes a glass head, bearing the name of a king who lived about 1450 B.C. The monuments carry us back much further even than this. On the paintings at Beni Hassan, which belong to the reign of Osirtasen I., who reigned B.C. 2000, we have figures of glass-blowers at work, and on the monuments of the tenth dynasty, some two centuries earlier still, are drawings of

bottles of transparent glass containing a red wine. The skill shown by the ancient Egyptian glass-blowers is almost incredible. Except perhaps in point of brilliancy—and the evidence here must necessarily be wanting, in consequence of the chemical changes which time causes in the substance of the glass—they seem to have equalled, and in some instances, surpassed any productions of more modern times. Their art in introducing different colours into the same vase has, I believe, as yet found no imitators. One very curious specimen of their skill has been preserved. It is not quite an inch in length, by $\frac{1}{2}$ in breadth, and $\frac{1}{8}$ in thickness, and contains a figure of a bird resembling a duck in very bright and varied colours. "The most delicate pencil of a miniature painter could not have traced with greater sharpness the circle of the eyeball or the plumage of the neck and wings." The most wonderful thing, however, is that the picture goes all through the glass, so that both sides show the same figure. The way in which it must have been made was by arranging threads of coloured and uncoloured glass in such a manner as to produce the required figure at each end of the mass. The threads were then united by heat, each thread being adjusted separately. The bar of glass thus made would be cut into horizontal sections, each section of course containing the figure. In some cases of similar work the details are so fine as only to be made out with a lens, which accordingly must have been used in its manufacture. It is extremely interesting to find that Mr. Layard did discover a magnifying lens at Nineveh.

Many specimens of Greek glass have come down to us, Mr. Webb exhibiting no fewer than thirty-three specimens in the Loan Collection at South Kensington. Of Roman glass, examples are much more numerous; the Museo Borbonico alone has 2,000. The Romans themselves considered a colourless glass as the most precious kind. Nero gave as much as 6,000 sestertia (nearly 50,000*l.*) for two cups with handles on each side. The most valuable example of Roman glass that has come down to us is the famous Portland or Barberini vase—"Portland's mystic urn," as Darwin calls it—now deposited in the British Museum. In 1845 it was wantonly broken into fragments, but has been most admirably restored by Mr. Doubleday, only one very small piece being wanting. This vase, which was found in a tomb supposed to be that of the Emperor Alexander Severus, who was murdered A.D. 235, is composed of two strata of glass, blue and white. The white surface was then carved like a cameo, leaving white figures on a dark background. It was purchased from Sir William Hamilton by the Duchess of Portland. At her sale the Duke of Portland, after a private understanding, it seems, with Wedgwood, bought it in at 1,029*l.* 10*s.*

Another very beautiful specimen belongs to the Trivulzi family. It is a cup, resembling opal, surrounded by a network of blue glass, attached by several small and very fine props. Round the rim is an inscription in green glass, attached like the network, *Bibe, vivas multos annos.* It was

evidently carved out of a solid piece of glass, made of two differently coloured strata. Another specimen of similar workmanship was exhibited by Baron Rothschild at the Loan Exhibition, 1862.

In the South Kensington Museum there is a very valuable and interesting collection of early Christian glass, the property of Mr. C. W. Wilshere. They are the centres of pateræ or bowls, the rest of the bowls having perished. These fragments are ornamented with figures of animals and other objects, cut out in gold leaf, the details being graved with a steel point. Sometimes a red background is added, and the whole picture then inserted between two folds of glass. The process itself seems to have been known to the ancient Egyptians. One beautiful specimen, about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, bears half-length portraits of a Roman lady and gentleman, and above, a bilingual inscription, PIE PESES. Around them are some Scriptural subjects. It was probably a wedding present. Mr. Wilshere was fortunate enough to secure these precious examples some few years ago for a comparatively small price. Other specimens are in the British Museum.

Of more modern glass the most valuable is the Venetian. A very fictitious value was in many cases put upon it, because it was considered a certain preservation against poison, the glass breaking when any noxious drug was put within it. The glass-makers at Venice were provided with houses on the island of Murano, and were forbidden, on pain of death, to carry their art elsewhere. The glass itself is coarse in quality and with very little lustre as compared with some recent specimens of English manufacture; but the beauty and elegance of the forms, and the marvellous skill in manipulation which is displayed, will always secure Venetian glass a foremost place in collections.

Many specimens of their art are no little puzzle to the uninitiated, who are as much at a loss at a filigree glass as King George was at the apple-dumpling. The process, however, is simple enough. A bundle of glass threads, coloured or otherwise, is plunged into a pot of colourless fused glass, in such a manner as to take up a sufficient quantity of it to envelop it with a transparent coating. In this way a stick of solid glass is made, about three inches in diameter, the pattern being now in the centre. This stick is then reheated and drawn out into a long cane, the operator meanwhile twisting the rod so as to give the enclosed threads a spiral pattern. It is then cut into such lengths as may be required. In order to form with these a filigree glass—*vasi a retorti* as they are called—a number of these canes—from twenty to forty—are placed side by side round the interior of an open mould, and then a quantity of fused glass blown in, enough to join them all together. It is then treated like an ordinary ball of glass and blown into shape, the workman again twisting the glass according to the required pattern. For the process of making a more complicated kind of glass—the *vasi a reticelli*—where two folds of glass are employed, so arranged that the threads cross each other like network, I

must refer my readers to Mr. Apsley Pellatt's excellent work, *Curiosities of Glass-making*. There also will be found an explanation of the millifiori glass, which at first sight seems so inexplicable.

We shall know more of the rich treasures which England possesses in the shape of glass, when Mr. Felix Slade is kind enough to give to the world the catalogue of his matchless collection upon which he has been so long engaged. Mr. Slade does not shrink from giving large prices for good and rare specimens. One instance may be quoted as an example. At the Soltikoff sale there was a goblet of rich emerald green colour, with a bulbed and fluted stem powdered with gold. The top and bottom of the bowl were ornamented with gold and jewelled bands, and between these were two medallions supported by cupids and surrounded by garlands, and containing portraits of a lady and gentleman, in the costume of the latter part of the fifteenth century. On a scroll before the male figure was the inscription, "Amor vol fee." Mr. Slade secured this fine specimen, after a spirited bidding against the agents of the Louvre, for 6,000 francs.

No specimens of glass in the Bernal collection fetched prices at all approaching to this. We find, however, Mr. N. T. Smith giving 50*l.* for one fine specimen; Baron Rothschild, 54*l.* for a tazza; and Mr. Slade, the highest price at that sale for such works, 55*l.* The same sale had some wonderful instances of the manner in which objects of natural history were pressed into service. Bunches of grapes, tulips, rampant horses carrying tazzas, serpents, pelicans, dolphins, and other creatures, are proofs and memorials of the skill of artists in glass in the Venice of former days.

Joan of Arc.

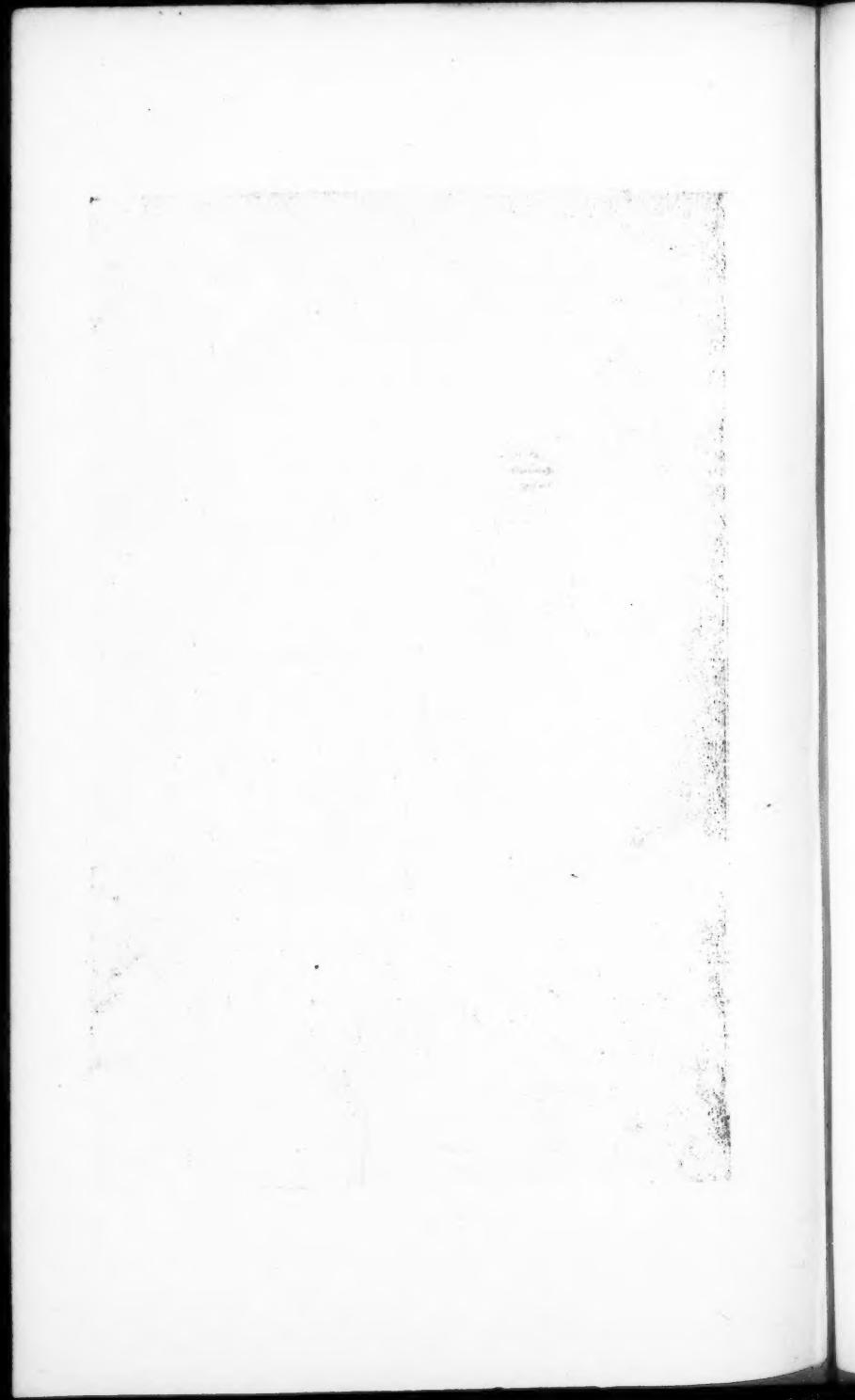
Und büszen will ich's mit der strengsten Busze
Das ich mich eitel über euch erhab.—SCHILLER.

*I read or dreamed, one sultry summer time,
How, at the last, France's knightly maiden fled,
And lived in silent honour, nobly wed,
Leaving her heritage of deathless fame
To the chance partner of her mortal shame,
Who should have died with her, and died instead.
Then, with two lines of German in my head,
I shaped her after-life in moody rhyme.*

A MOSSY battlemented wall went round
A rosy space of odorous garden ground,
Where the blue brooding sky hung very low,
Above the quaint-peaked shadow of the towers,
Above the sunny marge of ordered flowers,
Among the which I saw a lady go,
Telling her beads, with steady pace and slow ;
These done, she lifted half her cypress veil
With marble hands which might have held a sword,
And I beheld her face, sweet, still, and pale,
With tearless eyes, bent on the dewless sward.
Then raising her calm brow, but not her eyes,
To woo the sweetness of the summer skies,
Of her own desolate estate she sang,
Not sadly ; but her patient singing rang
So heavily upon her silver tongue,
A tale of peace and patience worse than pain,
That, as I heard, I knew her youth was slain ;
And yet her rounded face might still be young,
Who, making music neither high nor low,
But borne along a level stream of woe,
Sang words like these as nearly as I know :—
“ The banners of the battle are gone by,
The flowers are fallen from my maiden crown,
Thorns choke the tender seed of my renown,
Bleeding in sick astonishment I lie,
Where He who set me up hath cast me down.
If only I could hear the clarion cry,



JOAN OF ARC.



Nay, only feel the chain, and eye the stake ;
But it is over now, I cannot wake,
My sun is set, and dreams are of the night ;
Dreams ? one long, leaden dream, which will not break,
Lies on my aching eyelids till I die.
Dreaming I walk between the earth and heaven ;
And heaven is sealed, and earth is out of sight :
No cries, no threats, no heavenly voices now ;
Only the memory of a broken vow ;
Only the thought of having vainly striven ;
And France is still in bonds, and so am I :
I chose my bonds, and shall I be forgiven ?
Nay, therefore, I am cast away from God ;
For He hath made me like a broken rod
Not worth the burning when its work is done,
That bleaches idly in the summer sun,
Then rots as idly in the autumn rain,
Nor wonders why it left the root in vain.
I am God's broken rod ; shall I complain ?
I wake from dreams at best but bitter sweet,
Dreams chilled with danger, flushed with self-conceit ;
Only the waking seems so like a cheat ;
And yet I would not dream the dream again.
I was so blind, so fierce, so cruel then,
When, foremost in the press of fighting men,
I painted with my banner and my sword,
And fought, me seemed, the battles of my Lord.
Alas ! His poor are always full of pain,
Whether our Charles or English Henry reign.
My sisters still are happy the old way,
Their lives have taken root in soft deep clay,
In peace they grow, in peace they shall decay,
Seeing their fruit before they fade away ;
But all my barren flower of life is shed
In gusts of idle rumour overhead.
They have their wish : I would not be as they.
I have my wish—to rest—I rest in pain ;
My wishes kill each other, and the dead
Buzz still with ghostly stings about my head,
Not to be caught, and never to be slain.
O God ! is there worse pain in hell than this,—
To taste and loathe the quietness of bliss,
To shudder from the very sins we miss,
To long for any change, and yet to know
That any change must bring a bitterer woo !
God ! do the lost in torment praise Thee so ?

Counting Thy curse the lightest curse like me,
When loathing their sick selves, from self they flee
To hang with lesser loathing upon Thee?"

Her parched tongue ceased ; but still her feverish face
Seemed speaking, but no words found way again,
Till she stood quivering in her lord's embrace,
As chill reeds quiver in the warm spring rain.
For it was but a screen of thick pleached yew
Had kept him hidden from her heedless view,
In whose kind ears she cared not to complain ;
Because his ever ready eyes, she knew,
Would water her dry heart with barren dew.
He was a courteous knight of thirty years,
With that wise look that comes of early cares
And pondering long to have life over soon ;
His life was over, and he was content :
Peril, he thought, made ease a double boon,
As Easter comes the blither after Lent ;
So all men knew him, wheresoe'er he went,
By the grave leisure of his open brow,
That frankly seemed to ruminant on naught,
And gloat upon a vacancy of thought,—
For one of those who sleep of afternoons,
And hum the listless ends of lusty tunes.
But he had saved her from the flame for this,
The cruel flame, where one not two had died,
And she had ridden unsleeping at his side,
To that far castle, still and hardly won,
For which his early feats of arms were done,
And often bent her head to meet his kiss,
And whispered willingness to be his bride :
So she was walking in his garden now,
His quiet garden, where no rough wind blew,
Which seemed to sleep for ever in the sun
Of harvest, as its comely lord slept too ;
For he had land enough, and naught to do
But keep the rust from idle helm and glaive,
And whiten for the garner of the grave
At leisure, with his tale of years half run.
She paid him duteous, lingering kisses still,
She worked, she spoke, she rested at his will ;
And only now and then took leave to sigh,
When he, who loved her dearly, was not by.
But with the growing years a dull pain grew
That made her cower from his slumbrous eye,
And wonder when it would be time to die,

And wonder why her head would not grow grey :
But she had cheated him until that day,
With petty feints of woes she did not feel,
To hide what words were wanting to reveal.
Her skill grew with her trouble : even then,
Unwatched of serving maids or serving men,
She kept her passionate speech below her breath,
And let the blind tears burn her eyes unshed,
Only her marble cheek was pale as death,
As, finding voice before her lord, she said :
“ The sun beats hotly, friend, on your bare head.”
But he, “ I heard you sobbing, did I not ?
No ? let me turn with you, the sun *is* hot.”
Thereat they turned, where matted yew-trees made
A sudden cool of black undazzling shade,
Then half appeased the knight “ All well, my sweet ?
You tremble now so often when we meet.”
“ Yea, well, love ; ” and she braved his eager look,
That sought to read her pale face like a book,
And noted sallow cheek and swollen eye,
Whence he opined she suffered from the heat,
And felt her hand, the skin was hot and dry ;
He asked what ailed her, and how long, and whence,
And shyly muttered hints of pestilence.
Laughing almost, she sware she ailed no part.
Then far more tedious than a perfect fool,
Quoth her wise lord, “ What, lady, sick at heart ?
Tell me ? ” “ I cannot, nothing troubles me,
My heart is not your heart to beat by rule.”
“ Your feet still stagger from the stormy sea ; ”
“ At least the sea was living ; now I stand
On dead waste flats of sultry, stagnant land.”
“ You kissed that safe shore, and my helping hand
Once, when I think you did not care to die.”
“ Saint Katherine and Saint Margaret did not faint,
But saw their crowns, and put deliverance by,
Following the Bridegroom : I am not a saint.”
“ Thank God, not quite too high for me to wed.”
With a meek kiss she paid her thanks, and said,
“ You do not think the saints will judge the world ? ”
“ They will judge you did well in saving France.”
“ As well say that the pennon of your lance
Slays all whom those that ride behind it slay ;
Yet the torn pennon shall be nicely furled,
When men at arms are trampled into clay.”
“ Yea, and the brightest banner wins the fray.

You were the banner, nay, the soul of France :
Her mighty men were nothing but for you.”
“ Nay, but I needed others to work through.”
“ You grudge that others share your earthly fame ;
Trust me, heaven’s harps ring only to your name.”
“ You flatter me ; heaven’s harps ring only true.”
She paused. “ Not fame, but famous deeds to do !
Why am I kept idle ? If I only knew ! ”
“ Because God gives you early of His best :
I thank Him for this harvest of rich rest,
I thank Him, who did so much less by me,
And yet not less, because he set you free.”
“ The cowards, for they dared not let me go
Themselves, had need of a good knight for show
Of rescue.” Her good knight made answer, “ Nay,
Doomed by the Church, why let you slip away ? ”
“ Why ? must I teach you kings of France are men ?
Why ? the whole world cried shame on him, and then
His conscience might have woken to cry Amen.”
“ Wife, if God reckoned with you he might miss
Something of gratitude for all your bliss.”
With sunken eyelids and with folded hands,
She stood, as a meek guardian angel stands,
Who sees a sinner wandering out of reach.
He, stung to answer her unspoken speech,
Said hotly, “ Three things are insatiable,—
Our God, and any woman’s heart, and hell.”
Then lifting for a parting kiss her head,
With half a smile wrung out from somewhere, “ Well !
I go to give our maids fresh work,” she said,
“ They are insatiable of spinning wool.”

I dreamed : her saints were far more merciful.

G. A. SIMCOX.

Jack the Giant-Killer.

CHAPTER I.

ON MONSTERS, ETC.

Most of us have read at one time or another in our lives the article entitled *Gigantes*, which is to be found in a certain well-known dictionary. It tells of that terrible warfare in which gods and giants, fighting in fury, hurled burning woods and rocks through the air, piled mountains upon mountains, brought seas from their boundaries, thundering, to overwhelm their adversaries ;—it tells how the gods fled in their terror into Egypt, and hid themselves in the shapes of animals, until Hercules, the giant-killer of those strange times, sprang up to rescue and deliver the world from the dire storm and confusion into which it had fallen. Hercules laid about him with his club. Others since then, our Jack among the rest, have fought with gallant courage and devotion, and given their might and their strength and their lives to the battle. That battle which has no end, alas ! and which rages from sunrise to sundown,—although hero after hero comes forward, full of hope, of courage, of divine fire and indignation.

Who shall gainsay us, if now-a-days some of us may perhaps be tempted to think that the tides of victory flow, not with the heroes, but with the giants ; that the gods of our own land are hiding in strange disguises ; that the heroes battling against such unequal odds are weary and sad at heart ; while the giants, unconquered still, go roaming about the country, oppressing the poor, devouring the children, laying homes bare and desolate ?

Here is *The Times* of to-day,* full of a strange medley and record of the things which are in the world together—Jacks and giants, and champion-belts and testimonials ; kings and queens, knights and castles and ladies, screams of horror, and shouts of laughter, and of encouragement or anger. Feelings and prejudices and events,—all vibrating, urging, retarding, influencing one another.

And we read that some emperors are feasting in company at their splendid revels, while another is torn from his throne and carried away by a furious and angry foe, by a giant of the race which has filled the world with such terror in its time. Of late a young giant of that very tribe has marched through our own streets ; a giant at play, it is true, and feeding his morbid appetite with purses, chains and watches, and iron park railings ;

* May, 1867.

but who shall say that he may not perhaps grow impatient as time goes on, and cry for other food.

And meanwhile people are lying dying in hospitals, victims of one or more of the cruel monsters, whose ill deeds we all have witnessed. In St. Bartholomew's wards, for instance, are recorded twenty-three cases of victims dying from what doctors call *delirium tremens*. Which Jack is there among us strong enough to overcome the giant with his cruel fierce fangs, and force him to abandon his prey? Here is the history of two men suffocated in a vat at Bristol by the deadly gas from spent hops. One of them, Ambrose, is hurrying to the other one's help, and gives up his life for his companion. It seems hard that such men should be sent unarmed into the clutch of such pitiable monsters as this; and one grudges these two lives, and the tears of the widows and children. I might go on for many pages fitting the parable to the commonest facts of life. The great parochial Blunderbore still holds his own; some of his castles have been seized, but others are impregnable;—their doors are kept closed, their secrets are undiscovered.

Other giants, of the race of Cormoran, that "dwell in gloomy caverns, and wade over to the mainland to steal cattle," are at this instant beginning to creep from their foul dens, by sewers and stagnant waters, spreading death and dismay along their path. In the autumn their raids are widest and most deadly. Last spring I heard two women telling one another of a giant of the tribe of Cormoran camping down at Dorking in Surrey. A giant with a poisoned breath and hungry jaws, attacking not only cattle, but the harmless country people all about; children, and men, and women, whom he seized with his deadly gripe, and choked and devoured. Giant Blunderbore, it must be confessed, has had many a hard blow dealt him of late from one Jack and another. There is one gallant giant-killer at Fulham hard by, waging war with many monsters, the great blind giant Ignorance among the rest. Some valiant women, too, there are who have armed themselves, and gone forth with weak hands and tender strong hearts to do their best. I have seen some lately who are living in the very midst of the dreary labyrinth where one of the great Minotaurs of the city is lurking. They stand at the dark mouth of the poisonous caverns, warning and entreating those who, in their blindness and infatuation, are rushing thither, to beware. "I took a house and came," said one of them simply to my friend Mrs. K—— when she asked her how it happened that she was established there in the black heart of the city. All round her feet a little ragged tribe was squatting on the floor, and chirping, and spelling, and learning a lesson which, pray heaven, will last them their lives; and across the road, with pretty little crumpled mob-caps all awry on their brown heads, other children were sewing and at work under the quiet rule of their good teachers. The great business of the city was going on outside. The swarming docks were piled with bales and crowded with workmen; the main thoroughfares streaming and teeming with a struggling life; the side streets silent, deserted, and strangely still. A

bleak north-east wind was blowing down some of these grey streets. I have a vision before me now of one of them : a black deserted alley or passage, hung with some of those rags that seem to be like the banners of this reign of sorrow and sin. The wind swooped up over the stones, the rags waved and fell, and a colourless figure passing up the middle of the dirty gutter pulled at its grimy shawl and crouched as it slid along.

We may well say, we Londoners, see how far the east is from the west. I myself, coming home at night to the crowded cheerful station and travelling back to the light of love, of warmth, of comfort, find myself dimly wondering whether those are not indeed our sins out yonder set away from us, in that dreary East of London district ; our sins alive and standing along the roadside in rags and crying out to us as we pass.

Here in our country cottage the long summer is coming to an end, in falling leaves and setting suns, and gold and russet, where green shoots were twinkling a little time ago. The banks of the river have shifted their colours, and the water, too, has changed. The song of the birds is over ; but there are great flights in the air, rapid, mysterious. For weeks past we have been living in a gracious glamour and dazzle of light and warmth ; and now, as we see it go, H. and I make plans, not unwillingly, for a winter to be passed between the comfortable walls of our winter home. The children, hearing our talk, begin to prattle of the treasures they will find in the nursery at London as they call it. Dolly's head, which was unfortunately forgotten when we came away, and the panniers off the wooden donkey's back, and little neighbour Joan, who will come to tea again, in the doll's tea-things. Yesterday, when I came home from the railway-station across the bridge, little Anne, who had never in her short life seen the lamps of the distant town alight, came toddling up, chattering about "de pooty tandles," and pulling my dress to make me turn and see them too.

To-night other lights have been blazing. The west has been shining along the hills with a gorgeous autumnal fire. From our terrace we have watched the lights and the mists as they succeed one another, streaming mysteriously before yonder great high altar. It has been blazing as if for a solemn ceremonial and burnt sacrifice. As we watch it other people look on in the fields, on the hills, and from the windows of the town. Evening incense rises from the valley, and mounts up through the stillness. The waters catch the light, and repeat it ; the illumination falls upon us, too, as we look and see how high the heavens are in comparison with the earth ; and suddenly, as we are waiting still, and looking and admiring, it is over—the glory has changed into peaceful twilight.

And so we come away, closing shutters and doors and curtains, and settling down to our common occupations and thoughts again ; but outside another high service is beginning, and the lights of the great northern altar are burning faintly in their turn.

People say that extremes meet ; and in the same way that fancy worlds and dreams do not seem meant for the dreary stone streets and smoky

highways of life, neither do they belong to summer and holiday time, when reality is so vivid, so sweet, and so near, that it is but a waste to dream of fairies dancing in rings, or peeping from the woods, when the singing and shining is in all the air, and the living sunshiny children are running on the lawn, and pulling at the flowers with their determined little fingers. And there are butterflies and cuckoos and flowing streams and the sounds of flocks and the vibrations of summer everywhere. Little Anne comes trotting up with a rose-head tight crushed in her hand ; little Margery has got a fern-leaf stuck into her hat ; Puck, Peas-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustard-seed, themselves, are all invisible in this great day-shine. The gracious fancy kingdom vanishes at cock-crow, we know. It is not among realities so wonderful and beautiful that we can scarce realize them that we must look for it. Its greatest triumphs are where no other light shines to brighten—by weary sick beds ; when distance and loneliness oppress. Who cannot remember days and hours when a foolish conceit has come now and again, like a “flower growing on the edge of a precipice,” to distract the dizzy thoughts from the dark depths below ?

Certainly it was through no fancy world that poor John Trevithic's path led him wandering in life, but amid realities so stern and so pitiful at times that even his courage failed him now and then. He was no celebrated hero, though I have ventured to christen him after the great type of our childhood ; he was an honest, outspoken young fellow, with a stubborn temper and a tender heart, impressionable to outer things, although from within it was not often that anything seemed to affect his even moods and cheerful temper. He was a bright-faced, broad-set young fellow, about six-and-twenty, with thick light hair, and eagleish eyes, and lips and white teeth like a girl. His hands were like himself, broad and strong, with wide competent fingers, that could fight and hold fast, if need be ; and yet they were so clever and gentle withal, that children felt safe in his grasp and did not think of crying, and people in trouble would clutch at them when he put them out. Perhaps Jack did not always understand the extent of the griefs for which his cheerful sympathy was better medicine after all than any mere morbid investigations into their depths could have proved.

CHAPTER II.

C O R M O R A N.

THE first time I ever heard of the Rev. John Trevithic was at Sandsea one morning, when my maid brought in two cards, upon which were inscribed the respective names of Miss Moineaux and Miss Triquett. I had taken a small furnished house at the seaside (for H. was ailing in those days, and had been ordered salt air by the doctors) ; we knew nobody and nothing of the people of the place, so that I was at first a little bewildered by the visit ; but I gathered from a few indescribable

indications that the small fluttering lady who came in sideways was Miss Moineaux, and the bony, curly, scanty personage with the big hook-nose who accompanied her Miss Triquett. They both sat down very politely, as people do who are utter strangers to you and about to ask you for money. Miss Moineaux fixed a little pair of clear meek imploring eyes upon me. Miss Triquett took in the apartment with a quick uncomfortable swoop or ball-like glance. Then she closed her eyes for an instant as she cleared her throat.

She need not have been at any great pains in her investigations; the story told itself. Two middle-aged women, with their desks and work-baskets open before them, and *The Times* and some Indian letters just come in, on the table, the lodging-house mats, screens, Windsor chairs, and druggets, a fire burning for H.'s benefit, an open window for mine, the pleasant morning wash and rush of the sea against the terrace upon which the windows opened, and the voices of H.'s grandchildren playing outside. I can see all the cheerful glitter now as I write. I loved the little place that strikes me so quaintly and kindly as I think of it. The sun shone all the time we were there; day by day I saw health and strength coming into my H.'s pale face. The house was comfortable, the walks were pleasant, good news came to us of those we loved. In short, I was happy there, and one cannot always give a reason for being happy. In the meantime, Miss Triquett had made her observations with her wandering ball eyes.

"We called," she said, in a melancholy clerical voice, "thinking that you ladies might possibly be glad to avail yourselves of an opportunity for subscribing to a testimonial which we are about to present to our friend and pastor, the Reverend John Trevithic, M.A., and for which my friend Miss Moineaux and myself are fully prepared to receive subscriptions. You are perhaps not aware that we lose him on Tuesday week?"

"No, indeed," said I, and I am afraid my cap-strings began to rustle, as they have a way of doing when I am annoyed.

"I'm sure I'm afraid you must think it a great liberty of us to call," burst in little Miss Moineaux, flurriedly, in short disconnected sentences. "I trust you will pardon us. They say it is *quite* certain he is going. We *have* had a suspicion—perhaps . . ." Poor Miss Moineaux stopped short, and turned very red, for Triquett's eye was upon her. She continued, falteringly, "Miss Triquett kindly suggested collecting a teapot and strainer if possible,—it depends, of course, upon friends and admirers. You know how one *longs* to show one's gratitude; and I'm sure in our hopeless state of apathy we had so neglected the commonest precautions—."

Here Miss Triquett interposed. "The authorities were greatly to blame. Mr. Trevithic did his part, no more; but it is peculiarly as a pastor and teacher that we shall miss him. It is a pity that you have not been aware of his ministry." (A roll of the eyes.) A little rustle and chirrup from Miss Moineaux.

"If the ladies had only heard him last Sunday afternoon,—no, I mean the morning before."

"The evening appeal was still more impressive," said Miss Triquett. "I am looking forward anxiously to his farewell next Sunday."

It was really too bad. Were these two strange women who had come to take forcible possession of our morning-room about to discuss at any length the various merits of Mr. Trevithic's last sermon but two, but three, next but one, taking up my time, my room, asking for my money? I was fairly out of temper when, to my horror, H., in her flute voice from the sofa, where she had been lying under her soft silk quilt, said,—

"Mary, will you give these ladies a sovereign for me towards the teapot. Mr. Trevithic was at school with my Frank, and this is not, I think, the first sovereign he has had from me."

Miss Triquett's eyes roved over to the sofa. It must have seemed almost sacrilege to her to speak of Mr. Trevithic as a schoolboy, or even to have known him in jackets. "It is as a tribute to the pastor that these subscriptions are collected," said she, with some dignity, "not on any lower—"

But it was too late, for little Miss Moineaux had already sprang forward with a grateful "Oh, thank you!" and clasped H.'s thin hand.

And so at last we got rid of the poor little women. They fluttered off with their prize, their thin silk dresses catching the wind as they skimmed along the sands, their little faded mantles and veils and curls and petticoats flapping feebly after them, their poor little well-worn feet patting off in search of fresh tribute to Trevithic.

"I declare they were both in love with him, ridiculous old gooses," said I. "How could you give them that sovereign?"

"He was a delightful boy," said H. (She melts to all schoolboys still, though her own are grown men and out in the world.) "I used to be very angry with him; he and Frank were always getting into scrapes together," said H., with a smiling sigh, for Major Frank was on his way home from India, and the poor mother could trust herself to speak of him in her happiness. "I hope it is the right man," H. went on, laughing. "You must go and hear the farewell oration, Mary, and tell me how many of these little ladies are carried out of church."

They behaved like heroines. They never faltered or fainted, they gave no outward sign (except, indeed, a stifled sob here and there). I think the prospect of the teapot buoyed them up; for after the service two or three of them assembled in the churchyard, and eagerly discussed some measure of extreme emphasis. They were joined by the gentleman who had held the plate at the door, and then their voices died away into whispers, as the rector and Mr. Trevithic himself came out of the little side door, where Miss Bellingham, the rector's daughter, had been standing waiting. The rector was a smug old gentleman in a nice Sunday tie. He gave his arm to his daughter, and trotted along, saying, "How do? how do?" to the various personages he passed.

The curate followed : a straight and active young fellow, with a bright face, a face that looked right and left as he came along. He didn't seem embarrassed by the notice he excited. The four little girls from Coote Court (so somebody called them) rushed forward to meet him, saying, "Good-by, dear Mr. Trevithic, good-by." Mrs. Myles herself, sliding off to her pony carriage, carrying her satin train all over her arms, stopped to smile, and to put out a slender hand, letting the satin stuff fall into the dust. Young Lord and Lady Wargrave were hurrying away with their various guests, but they turned and came back to say a friendly word to this popular young curate ; and Colonel Hambledon, Lord Wargrave's brother, gave him a friendly nod, and said, "I shall look in one day before you go." I happened to know the names of all these people, because I had sat in Mrs. Myles's pew at church, and I had seen the Wargraves in London.

The subscribers to the teapot were invited to visit it at Mr. Phillips's, in Cockspur Street, to whom the design had been entrusted. It was a very handsome teapot, as ugly as other teapots of the florid order, and the chief peculiarity was that a snake grasped by a clenched hand formed the handle, and a figure with bandages on its head was sitting on the melon on the lid. This was intended to represent an invalid recovering from illness. Upon one side was the following inscription :—

TO
THE REV. JOHN TREVITHIC, M.A.,
FROM HIS PARISHIONERS AT SANDSEA,
IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIS EXERTIONS DURING THE
CHOLERA SEASON OF 18—,
AND HIS SUCCESSFUL AND ENTERPRISING EFFORTS FOR THE IMPROVED DRAINAGE
OF HIGH STREET AND THE NEIGHBOURING ALLEYS,
ESPECIALLY THOSE
KNOWN AS "ST. MICHAEL'S BUILDINGS."

Upon the other,

TO THE REV. JOHN TREVITHIC, M.A.

Both these inscriptions were composed by Major Coote, of Coote Court, a J. P. for the county. Several other magistrates had subscribed, and the presentation paper was signed by most of the ladies of the town. I recognized the bold autograph of Louisa Triquett, and the lady-like quill of Sarah Moineaux, among the rest. H. figured as "Anon." down at the bottom.

Jack had honestly earned his teapot, the pride of his mother's old heart. He had worked hard during that unfortunate outbreak of cholera, and when the summer came round again, the young man had written quires, ridden miles, talked himself hoarse, about this neglected sewer in St. Michael's Buildings. The town council, finding that the whole of High Street would have to be taken up, and what a very serious undertaking it was likely to be, were anxious to compromise matters, and they might

have succeeded in doing so if it had not been for the young man's determination. Old Mr. Bellingham, who had survived some seventy cholera seasons, was not likely to be very active in the matter. Everybody was away, as it happened, at that time except Major Coote, who was easily talked over by anybody; Jobsen, the mayor, had got hold of him, and Trevithic had to fight the battle alone. One person sympathized with him from the beginning, and talked to her father, and insisted, very persistently, that he should see the necessity of the measure. This was Anne Bellingham, who, with her soft pink eyes fixed on Trevithic's face, listened to every word he said with interest—an interest which quite touched and gratified the young man, breathless and weary of persuading fishmongers, of trying to influence the sleek obstinate butcher, and the careworn baker with his ten dusty children, and the stolid oil and colourman, who happened to be the mayor that year. It seemed, indeed, a hopeless case to persuade these worthy people to increase the rates, to dig up the High Street under their very windows, to poison themselves and their families, and drive away custom just as the season was beginning. John confessed humbly that he had been wrong, that he should have pressed the matter more urgently upon them in the spring, but he had been ill and away, if they remembered, and others had promised to see to it. It would be all over in a week, before their regular customers arrived.

Jack's eloquence succeeded in the end. How it came about I can scarcely tell—he himself scarcely knew. He had raised the funds, written to Lord Wargrave, and brought Colonel Hambledon himself down from town; between them they arranged with the contractors, and it was all settled almost without anybody's leave or authority. One morning, Trevithic hearing a distant rumbling of wheels, jumped up from his breakfast and ran to his window. A file of carts and workmen were passing the end of the street, men with pickaxes and shovels; carts laden with strange-looking pipes and iron bars. Mr. Moffat, the indignant butcher, found a pit of ten feet deep at his shop-door that evening; and Smutt, the baker, in a fury, had to send his wife and children to her mother, to be out of the way of the mess. In a week, however, the whole thing was done, the pit was covered over, the foul stream they dreaded was buried down deep in the earth, and then in a little while the tide of opinion began to turn. When all the coast was in a terror and confusion, when cholera had broken out in one place and in another, and the lodging-houses were empty, the shopkeepers loud in complaints, at Sandsea, thanks to the well-timed exertions, as people call draining, not a single case was reported, and though the season was not a good one for ordinary times, compared to other neighbouring places, Sandsea was triumphant. Smutt was apologetic, Moffat was radiant, and so was Anne Bellingham in her quiet way. As for Miss Triquett, that devoted adherent, she nearly jumped for joy, hearing that the mayor of the adjoining watering-place was ill of the prevailing epidemic and not expected to live.

And then the winter went by, and this time of excitement passed over

and the spring-time came, and John began to look about and ask questions about other men's doings and ways of life. It did not come upon him all in one day that he wanted a change, but little by little he realized that something was amiss. He himself could hardly tell what it was when Colonel Hambledon asked him one day. For one thing I think his own popularity oppressed him. He was too good-humoured and good-natured not to respond to the advances which met him from one side and another, but there were but few of the people, except Miss Bellingham, with whom he felt any very real sympathy, beyond that of gratitude and good-fellowship. Colonel Hambledon was his friend, but he was almost constantly away, and the Wargraves too only came down from time to time. Jack would have liked to see more of Mrs. Myles, the pretty widow, but she was the only person in the place who seemed to avoid him. Colonel Coote was a silly good-natured old man; Miss Triquett and Miss Moineaux were scarcely companions. Talking to these ladies, who agreed with every word he said, was something like looking at his own face reflected in a spoon.

Poor Trevithic used to long to fly when they began to quote his own sermons to him; but his practice was better than his preaching, and too kind-hearted to wound their feelings by any expression of impatience, he would wait patiently while Miss Moineaux nervously tried to remember what it was that had made such an impression upon her the last time she heard him; or Miss Triquett expressed her views on the management of the poor-kitchen, and read out portions of her correspondence, such as :

“ *MY DEAREST MARIA*,—I have delayed answering your very kind letter until the return of the warmer weather. Deeply as I sympathize with your well-meant efforts for the welfare of your poorer neighbours, I am sorry that I cannot subscribe to the fund you are raising for the benefit of your curate.”

“ My aunt is blunt, very blunt,” said Miss Triquett, explaining away any little awkwardness, “ but she is *very* good, Mr. Trevithic, and you have sometimes said that we must not expect too much from our relations; I try to remember that.”

It was impossible to be seriously angry. Jack looked at her oddly as she stood there by the pump in the market-place where she had caught him. How familiar the whole scene was to him; the village street, the gable of the rectory on the hill up above, Miss Triquett’s immovable glare; —a stern vision of her used to rise before him long after and make him almost laugh, looking back from a different place and world, with strange eyes that had seen so many things that did not exist for him in those dear tiresome old days.

Jack and Miss Triquett were on their way to the soup-kitchen, where the district meeting was held once a month. Seeing Colonel Hambledon across the street, Trevithic escaped for a minute to speak to him, while Triquett went on. The ladies came dropping in one by one. It was a low room with a

bow window on the street, and through an open door came a smell of roast-mutton from the kitchen, where a fire was burning; and a glimpse of a poultry-yard beyond the kitchen itself. There were little mettles hung up all about in antique spelling, such as "Caste thy breddle upon ye watteres," the fancy and design of Mrs. Vickers, the present manager. She was very languid, and high-church, and opposed to Miss Triquett and her friend Miss Hutchetts, who had reigned there before Mrs. Vickers' accession. This housekeeping was a serious business. It was a labour of love, and of jealousy too: each district lady took the appointment in turn, while the others looked on and ratified her measures. There was a sort of house of commons composed of Miss Simmonds, who enjoyed a certain consideration because she was so very fat; good old Mrs. Fox, with her white hair; and Mrs. Champion, a sort of lord chancellor in petticoats; and when everybody made objections the housekeeper sometimes resigned. Mrs. Vickers had held firm for some months, and here she is sorting out little tickets, writing little bills into a book, and comparing notes with the paper lists which the ladies have brought in."

"Two-and-sixpence a week for her lodging, three children, two deformed; owes fifteen shillings, deserted wife, can get no relief from the parent," Miss Moineaux reads out from her slip.

"That is a hopeless case," says Mrs. Champion; "let her go into the workhouse."

"They have been there for months," says Miss Moineaux, perhaps.

"It is no use trying to help such people," says Miss Triquett, decidedly.

"Here is a pretty doctrine," cried Miss Simmonds; "the worse off folks are the less help they may expect."

"When people are hopelessly lazy, dirty, and diseased," said Miss Triquett, with some asperity, "the money is only wasted which might be invaluable to the deserving. As long as I am entrusted with funds from this charity, I shall take care they are well bestowed."

"I—I have promised Gummers some assistance," filtered Miss Moineaux.

Miss Simmonds. "And she ought to have it, my dear."

Miss T. "I think you forget that it is for Mr. Trevithic to decide."

Miss S. "I think you are forgetting your duty as a Christian woman."

Miss T. "I choose to overlook this insult. I will appeal to Mr. Trevithic."

Miss S. "Pray do not take the trouble to forgive me, Miss Triquett, or to appeal to any one. Never since Miss Hutchetts went away—"

Miss T. "Miss Hutchetts is my friend, and I will not allow her name to be—"

Exit Miss Moineaux in alarm to call for assistance. Miss Hutchetts, as they all know, is the string of the shower-bath, the war-cry of the Amazons.

The battle was raging furiously when Miss Moineaux came back and

flung herself devotedly into the *mélée*. Miss Triquett was charging right and left, shells were flying, artillery rattling. It was a wonder the windows were not broken.

Mrs. Champion was engaged with a hand-to-hand fight with Miss Simmonds. Mrs. Vickers was laughing, Miss Moineaux was trembling; out of the window poured such a clamorous mob of words and swell of voices that John and the Colonel stopped to listen instead of going in. A dog and a puppy, attracted by the noise, stood wagging their tails in the sun."

"Hutchetts—Christian dooty—dirty children—statistics—gammon," that was Miss Simmonds' voice, there was no mistaking. "Ladies, I beg," from Mrs. Vickers; and here the alarm-bell began to ring ten minutes before the children's dinner, and the sun shone, and the heads bobbed at the window, and all of a sudden there was a lull.

Trevithic, who like a coward had stopped outside while the battle was raging, ran up the low flight of steps to see what had been going on now that the danger was over, the guns silent, and the field, perhaps, strewed with the dead and the dying. No harm was done, he found, when he walked into the room, only Miss Triquett was hurt, her feelings had been wounded in the engagement, and she was murmuring that her friend Miss Hutchetts' character as a gentlewoman had been attacked, but no one was listening to her. Mrs. Vickers was talking to a smiling and pleasant-looking lady, who was standing in the middle of the room. I don't know by what natural art Mary Myles had quieted all the turmoil which had been raging a minute before, but her pretty winsome ways had an interest and fascination for them all; for old Miss Triquett herself, who had not very much that was pleasant or pretty to look at, and who by degrees seemed to be won over too to forget Miss Hutchetts, in her interest in what this pretty widow was saying,—it was only something about a school-treat in her garden. She stopped short and blushed as Trevithic came in. "Oh, here is Mr. Trevithic," she said; "I will wait till he has finished his business."

Jack would rather not have entered into it in her presence, but he began as usual, and plodded on methodically, and entered into the mysteries of soup meat, and flannelling, and rheumatics, and the various ills and remedies of life, but he could not help feeling a certain scorn for himself, and embarrassment and contempt for the shame he was feeling; and as he caught Mary Myles' bright still eyes curiously fixed upon him, Jack wondered whether anywhere else in the world, away from these curious glances, he might not find work to do more congenial and worthy of the name. It was not Mrs. Myles' presence which affected him so greatly, but it seemed like the last grain in the balance against this chirrupping tea-drinking life he had been leading so long. It was an impossibility any longer. He was tired of it. There was not one of these old women who was not doing her part more completely than he was, with more heart and good spirit than himself.

Some one had spoken to him of a workhouse chaplaincy going begging at Hammersley, a great inland town on the borders of Wales. Jack was like a clock which begins to strike as soon as the hands point to the hour. That very night he determined to go over and see the place ; and he wrote to a friend of his at Hammersley to get him permission, and to tell the authorities of the intention with which he came.

CHAPTER III.

A N O G R E S S.

WHEN John Trevithic, with his radiant cheerful face, marched for the first time through the wards of St. Magdalene's, the old creatures propped up on their pillows to see him pass, both the master and mistress went with him, duly impressed with his possible importance, and pointed out one person and another ; and as the mighty trio advanced the poor souls cringed, and sighed, and greeted them with strange nods, and gasps, and contortions. John trudged along, saying little, but glancing right and left with his bright eyes. He was very much struck, and somewhat overcome by the sight of so much that was sad, and in orderly rows, and a blue cotton uniform. Was this to be his charge ? all these hundreds of weary years, all these aching limbs and desolate waifs from stranded homes, this afflicted multitude of past sufferings. He said nothing but walked along with his hands in his pockets, looking in vain to see some face brighten at the master's approach. The faces worked, twitched, woke up eagerly, but not one caught the light which is reflected from the heart. What endless wards, what a labyrinth of woes enclosed in the whitewashed walls. A few poor prints of royal personages, and of hop-gathering, and Christmas out of the *London News*, were hanging on them. Whitewash and blue cotton, and weary faces in the women's wards ; whitewash and brown fustian, and sullen, stupid looks in the men's : this was all Trevithic carried away in his brain that first day ;—misery and whitewash, and a dull choking atmosphere, from which he was ashamed almost to escape out into the street, into the square, into the open fields outside the town, across which his way led back to the station.

Man proposes, and if ever a man honestly proposed and determined to do his duty, it was John Trevithic, stretched out in his railway corner, young and stout of heart and of limb, eager for change and for work. He was not very particular ; troubles did not oppose him morbidly. He had not been bred up in so refined a school that poverty and suffering frightened him ; but the sight of all this hopelessness, age, failure, all neatly stowed away, and whitewashed over in those stony wards, haunted him all the way home. They haunted him all the way up to the rectory, where he was to dine that evening, and between the intervals of talk, which were pretty frequent after Miss Bellingham had left the room and the two gentlemen to their claret. Jack had almost made up his mind, and indeed he felt like a

traitor as he came into the drawing-room, and he saw how Anne brightened up as she beckoned him across the room and made him sit down beside her. A great full harvest-moon was shining in at the window, a nightingale was singing its melancholy song, a little wind blew in and rustled round the room, and Anne, in her muslins and laces, looked like a beautiful pale pensive dream-lady by his side. Perhaps he might not see her again, he thought rather sentimentally, and that henceforth their ways would lie asunder. But how kind she had been to him. How pretty she was. What graceful womanly ways she had. How sorry he should be to part from her. He came away and said good-by quite sadly, looking in her face with a sort of apology, as if to beg her pardon for what he was going to do. He had a feeling that she would be sorry that he should leave her—a little sorry, although she was far removed from him. The nightingale sang to him all the way home along the lane, and Jack slept very sound, and awoke in the morning quite determined in his mind. As his landlady brought in his breakfast-tray he said to himself that there was nothing more to keep him at Sandsea, and then he sat down and wrote to Mr. Bellingham that instant, and sent up the note by Mrs. Bazley's boy.

A little later in the day Trevithic went over to the rectory himself. He wanted to get the matter quite settled, for he could not help feeling sorry as he came along and wondering whether he had been right after all. He asked for the rector and the man showed him into the study, and in a minute more the door opened, but it was Miss Bellingham, not her father, who came in.

She looked very strange and pale, and put out two trembling hands, in one of which she was holding John's letter.

"Oh, Mr. Trevithic, what is this? what does this mean?" she said.

What indeed? he need never have written the words, for in another minute, suddenly Miss Bellingham burst into tears.

They were very ill-timed tears as far as her own happiness was concerned, as well as that of poor John Trevithic, who stood by full of compassion, of secret terror at his own weakness, of which for the first time he began to suspect the extent. He was touched and greatly affected. He walked away to the fireplace and came back and stood before her, an honest, single-hearted young fellow, with an immense compassion for weak things, such as women and children, and a great confidence in himself; and as he stood there he flushed in a struggle of compassion, attraction, revulsion, pity, and cruel disappointment. Those tears coming just then relieved Anne Bellingham's heavy heart as they flowed in a passionate stream, and at the same time they quenched many a youthful fire, destroyed in their track many a dream of battle and victory, of persevering struggle and courageous efforts for the rights of the wronged upon earth. They changed the course of Trevithic's life at the time, though in the end, perhaps, who shall say that it was greatly altered by the complainings and foolish fondness of this poor soul whom he was now trying to quiet and comfort? I, for my part,

don't believe that people are so much affected by circumstance in the long run as some people would have it. We think it a great matter that we turned to the right or the left; but both paths go over the hill. Jack, as his friends called him, had determined to leave a certain little beaten track of which he was getting weary, and he had come up to say good-by to a friend of his, and to tell her that he was going, and this was the result.

She went on crying—she could not help herself now. She was a fragile-looking little thing, a year or so younger than Jack, her spiritual curate and future husband, whom she had now known for two years.

"You see there is nothing particular for me to do here," he stammered, blushing. "A great strong fellow like myself ought to be putting his shoulder to the wheel."

"I—I had so hoped that you had been happy here with us," said Miss Bellingham.

"Of course I have been happy—happier than I have ever been in my life," said Jack, with some feeling; "and I shall never forget your kindness; but the fact is, I have been too happy. This is a little haven where some worn-out old veteran might recruit and grow young again in your kind keeping. It's no place for a raw recruit like myself."

"Oh, think—oh, think of it again," faltered Anne. "Please change your mind. We would try and make it less—less worldly—more like what you wish."

"No, dear lady," said Trevithic, half smiling, half sighing. "You are goodness and kindness itself, but I must be consistent, I'm afraid. Nobody wants me here; I may be of use elsewhere, and . . . Oh! Miss Bellingham, don't—don't—pray don't—"

"You know—you know you are wanted here," cried Miss Bellingham; and the momentous tears began to flow again down her cheeks all unchecked, though she put up her fingers to hide them. She was standing by a table, a slim creature, in a white dress. "Oh, forgive me!" she sobbed, and she put out one tear-washed hand to him, and then she pushed him away with her weak violence, and went and flung herself down into her father's big chair, and leant against the old red cushion in an agony of grief, and shame, and despair. Her little dog began barking furiously at John, and her bird began to sing, and all the afternoon sun was streaming and blinding into the room.

"Oh, don't, don't despise me," moaned the poor thing, putting up her weary hand to her head. The action was so helpless, the voice so pathetic, that Trevithic resisted no longer.

"Despise you, my poor darling," said John, utterly melted and overcome, and he stooped over, and took the poor little soul into his arms. "I see," he said, "that we two must never be parted again, and if I go, you must come with me." . . .

It was done. It was over. When Jack dashed back to his lodgings it was in a state of excitement so great that he had hardly time to ask himself whether it was for the best or the worst. The tears of the trembling

appealing little quivering figure had so unnerved him, so touched and affected him, that he had hardly known what he said or what he did not say, his pity and innate tenderness of heart had carried him away ; it was more like a mother than a lover that he took this poor little fluttering bird into his keeping, and vowed and prayed to keep it safe. But everything was vague, and new, and unlikeness as yet. The future seemed floating with shadows and vibrations, and waving and settling into the present. He had left home a free man, with a career before him, without ties to check him or to hold him back (except, indeed, the poor old mother in her little house at Barfleet, but that clasp was so slight, so gentle, so unselfish, that it could scarcely be counted one now). And now, ' Chained and bound by the ties of our sins,' something kept dinning in his bewildered brain.

Mrs. Bazley opened the door with her usual grin of welcome, and asked him if he had lunched, or if she should bring up the tray. Trevithic shook his head, and brushed past her up the stairs, leaping three or four at a time, and he dashed into his own room, and banged the door, and went and leant up against the wall, with his hand to his head, in a dizzy, sickened, miserable bewilderment, at which he himself was shocked and frightened. What had he done, what would this lead to ? He paced up and down his room until he could bear it no longer, and then he went back to the rectory. Anne had been watching for him, and came out to meet him, and slid her jealous hand in his arm.

" Come away," she whispered. " There are some people in the house. Mary Myles is there talking to papa. I have not told him yet. I can't believe it enough to tell any one."

John could hardly believe it either, or that this was the Miss Beltingham he had known hitherto. She seemed so dear, so changed, this indolent county beauty, this calm young mistress of the house, now bright, quick, excited, moved to laughter : a hundred sweet tints and colours seemed awakened and brought to light which he had never noticed or suspected before.

" I have a reason," Anne went on. " I want you to speak of this to no one but me and papa. I will tell you very soon, perhaps to-morrow. Here, come and sit under the lilac-tree, and then they cannot see us from the drawing-room."

Anne's reason was this, that the rector of a living in her father's gift was dying, but she was not sure that Jack would be content to wait for a dead man's shoes, and she gave him no hint of a scheme she had made.

The news of John's departure spread very quickly, but that of his engagement was only suspected ; and no allusion to his approaching marriage was made when the teapot was presented to him in state.

I have ventured to christen my hero Jack, after a celebrated champion of that name ; but we all know how the giant-killer himself fell asleep in the forest soon after he received the badge of honour and distinction to which he was so fairly entitled. Did poor John Trevithic, now the possessor of the teapot of honour, fall asleep thus early on his travels

and forgot all his hopes and his schemes ? At first, in the natural excitement of his engagement, he put off one plan and another, and wrote to delay his application for the chaplaincy of the workhouse. He had made a great sacrifice for Anne : for he was not in love with her, as he knew from the very beginning : but he soon fell into the habit of caring for her and petting her, and, little by little, her devotion and blind partiality seemed to draw him nearer and nearer to the new ways he had accepted. The engagement gave great satisfaction. Hambledon shook him warmly by the hand, and said something about a better vocation than Bumbledom and workhouses. Jack bit his lips. It was a sore point with him, and he could not bear to think of it.

How Anne had begged and prayed and insisted, and put up her gentle hands in entreaty, when he had proposed to take her to live there.

" It would kill me," she said. " Oh, John, there is something much better, much more useful for you coming in a very little while. I wanted people to hear of our marriage and of our new home together. Poor old Mr. Yorken is dead. Papa is going to give us his Lincolnshire living ; it is his very own. Are you too proud to take anything from me, to whom you have given your life ? " And her wistful entreaties were not without their effect, as she clung to him with her strange jealous eagerness. The determined young fellow gave in again and again. He had fallen into one of those moods of weakness and irresolution of which one has heard even among the fiercest and boldest of heroes. It was so great a sacrifice to him to give up his dreams that it never occurred to him for a moment that he was deserting his flag. It was a strange transformation which had come over this young fellow, of which the least part was being married.

I don't know whether the old ladies were disappointed or not that he did not actually go away as soon as was expected. The announcement of his marriage, however, made up for everything else, and they all attended the ceremony. Mr. and Mrs. Trevithic went away for their honeymoon, and to see old Mrs. Trevithic at Barfeet, and then they came back to the rectory until the house in Lincolnshire should be ready to receive them.

For some time after his marriage, Jack could hardly believe that so great an event had come about so easily. Nothing was much changed ; the port-wine twinkled in the same decanters, the old rector dozed off in his chair after dinner, the sunset streamed into the dining-room from the same gap in the trees which skirted the churchyard. Anne, in the drawing-room in her muslins and lilac ribbons, sewed her worsted work in her corner by the window, or strummed her variations on the pianoforte. Tumty tinkle tumty—no—tinkle tumty tumty, as she corrected herself at the same place in the same song. " Do you know the songs without words ? " she used to say to him when he first came. Know them ! At the end of six weeks poor Jack could have told you every note of the half-dozen songs which Anne had twittered out so often, only she put neither song nor words to the notes, nor time, nor anything but pedals and fingers. One of these she was specially fond of playing. It begins

with a few tramping chords and climbs on to a solemn blast that might be sounded in a cathedral or at the triumphant funeral of a warrior dying in victory. Anne had taken it into her head to play this with expression, and to drag out the crisp chords—some of them she thought sounded prettier in a higher octave—and then she would look up with an archly affectionate smile as she finished. Jack used to respond with a kind little nod of the head at first, but he could not admire his wife's playing, and he wished she would mind her music and not be thinking of herself and nodding at him all the time. Had he promised to stuff up his ears with cotton-wool and to act fibs at the altar? He didn't know; he rather thought he had—he—psha! Where was that number of the *North British Review*? and the young man went off into his study to look for it and to escape from himself.

Poor Jack! He dimly felt now and then that all his life he should have to listen to tunes such as these, and be expected to beat time to them. Like others before and since, he began to feel that what one expects and what is expected of one, are among the many impossible conditions of life. You don't get it and you don't give it, and you never will as long as you live, except, indeed, when Heaven's sacred fire of love comes to inspire and teach you to do unconsciously and gladly what is clearer and nearer and more grateful than the result of hours of straining effort and self-denial.

But these hours were a long way off as yet, and Jack was still asking himself how much longer it would all last, and how could it be that he was here settled for life and a married man, and that that pale little woman with the straight smooth light hair was his wife, and that fat old gentleman fast asleep, who had been his rector a few weeks ago, was his father-in-law now, while all the world went on as usual, and nothing had changed except the relations of these three people to each other?

Poor Jack! He had got a treasure of a wife, I suppose. Anne Bellingham had ruled at the rectory for twenty-four years with a calm, despotic sway that old Mr. Bellingham never attempted to dispute. Gentle, obstinate, ladylike, graceful, with a clear complexion, and one of those thin transparent noses which some people admire, she glided about in her full flitting skirts, feeling herself the prop and elegant comforter of her father's declining years. She used to put rosebuds into his study; and though old Mr. Bellingham didn't care for flowers, and disliked anything upon his table, he never thought of removing the slender glass fabric his daughter's white fingers had so carefully ornamented. She took care that clean muslin covers, with neat little bows at each corner, should duly succeed one another over the back of the big study chair. It is true the muslin scratched Mr. Bellingham's bald head, and he once ventured to remove the objectionable pinafore with his careful, clumsy old fingers; but next day he found it was firmly and neatly stretched down in its place again, and it was beyond his skill to unpick the threads. Anne also took care that her father's dressing things should be put out for dinner; and if the poor old gentleman delayed or tried to evade the ceremony, the startled

man who cleaned the plate and waited upon them was instructed to tell his master that the dressing-bell had rung : housemaids came in to tidy the room ; windows were opened to renew the air : the poor rector could only retire and do as he was bid. How Anne had managed all her life to get her own way in everything is more than I can explain. It was a very calm, persistent, commonplace way, but every one gave in to it. And so it happened that as soon as Jack was her husband, Anne expected that he was to change altogether ; see with her pink, watery eyes ; care for the things she cared for ; and be content henceforth with her mild aspirations after county society in this world, and a good position in the next. Anne imagined, in some vague manner, that these were both good things to be worked out together by punctuality on Sundays, family prayer, a certain amount of attention to their neighbours (varying, of course, with the position of the persons in question), and due regard for the decencies of life. To see her rustling into church in her long silk dress and French bonnet, with her smooth bands of hair, the slender hands neatly gloved, and the prayer-book, hymn-book, pocket-handkerchief, and smelling-bottle, all her little phylacteries in their places, was an example to the neighbourhood. To the vulgar Christians straggling in from the lodging-houses and the town, and displaying their flyaway hats or highly-pomatumated heads of hair ; to the little charity children, gaping at her over the wooden gallery ; to St. Mary Magdalene up in the window, with her tangled locks ; to Mrs. Cootc herself, who always came in late, with her four little girls tumbling over her dress and shuffling after her ; not to mention Trevithic himself, up in his reading desk, leaning back in his chair. For the last six months, in the excitement of his presence, in the disturbance of her usual equable frame of mind, it was scarcely the real Anne Bellingham he had known, or, maybe perhaps, it *was* the real woman stirred out of her Philistinism by the great tender hand of nature and the wonderful inspiration of love. Now, day by day her old ways began to grow upon her. Jack had not been married three weeks before a sort of terror began quietly to overwhelm him, a terror of his wife's genteel infallibility. As for Anne, she had got what she wanted ; she had cried for the moon, and it was hers ; and she, too, began almost immediately to feel that now she had got it she did not know what to do with it exactly. She wanted it to turn the other way, and it wouldn't go, and to rise at the same hour, and it seemed to change day by day on purpose to vex her.

And then she cried again, poor woman ; but her tears were of little avail. I suppose Jack was very much to blame, and certainly at this time his popularity declined a little, and people shrugged their shoulders and said he was a lucky young fellow to get a pretty girl and a good living and fifteen thousand pounds in one morning, and that he had feathered his nest well. And so he had, poor fellow, only too well, for to be sunk in a moral feather-bed is not the most enviable of fates to an active-minded man of six or seven and twenty.

The second morning after their return Anne had dragged him out to

her favourite lilac-tree bench upon the height in the garden, from whence you can see all the freshness of the morning brightening from bay to bay green, close at hand, salt wave and more green down below, busy life on land, and a flitting, drifting, white-sailed life upon the water. As Trevithic looked at it all with a momentary admiration, his wife said,—

“Isn’t it much nicer to be up here with me, John, than down in those horrid lodgings in the town?”

And John laughed, and said, Yes, the air was very delicious.”

“You needn’t have worked so hard at that draining if you had been living up here,” Anne went on, quite unconsciously. “I do believe one might live for ever in this place and never get any harm from those miserable places. I hear there is small-pox in Mark’s Alley. Promise me, dear, that you will not go near them.”

“I am afraid I must go if they want me,” said John.

“No, dearest,” Anne said gently. “You have to think of me first now. It would be wrong of you to go. Papa and I have never had the small-pox.”

Trevithic didn’t answer. As his wife spoke, something else spoke too. The little boats glittered and scudded on; the whole sight was as sweet and prosperous as it had been a minute before; but he was not looking at it any more; a strange new feeling had seized hold of him, a devil of sudden growth, and Trevithic was so little used to self-contemplation and inner experience, that it shocked him and frightened him to find himself standing there calmly talking to his wife, without any quarrel angry in his heart, without any separation parted from her. “Anne and I could not be farther apart at this instant,” thought John, “if I were at the other side of that sea, and she standing here all alone.”

“What is the matter?” said poor Anne, affectionately, brushing a little thread off his coat.

“Can’t you understand?” said he, drawing away.

“Understand?” Anne repeated. “I know that you are naughty, and want to do what you must not think of.”

“I thought that when I married you, you cared for the things that I care about,” cried poor John, exasperated by her playfulness, “and understood that a man must do his business in life, and that marriage does not absolve him from every other duty. I thought you cared—you said you did—for the poor people in trouble down there. Don’t make it difficult for me to go to them, dear.”

“No, dear John. I could not possibly allow it,” said his wife, decidedly. “You are not a doctor; it is not your business to nurse small-pox patients. Papa never thinks of going where there is infection.”

“My dear Anne,” said John, fairly out of temper, “nobody ever thought your father had done his duty by the place, and you must allow your husband to go his own way, and not interfere any more.”

“It is very, very wrong of you, John, to say such things,” said Anne,

flushing, and speaking very slowly and gently. " You forget yourself and me too, I think, when you speak so coarsely. You should begin your reforms at home, and learn to control your temper before you go and preach to people with dreadful illnesses. They cannot possibly want you, or be in a fit state to be visited."

If Anne had only lost her temper, flared up at him, talked nonsense, he could have borne it better, but there she stood, quiet, composed, infinitely his superior in her perfect self-possession. Jack left her all ashamed of himself, in a fume and a fury, as he strode down into the town.

The small-pox turned out to be a false alarm, spread by some ingenious parishioners who wished for relief and who greatly disliked the visits of the excellent district ladies, and the matter was compromised. But that afternoon Miss Triquett, meeting John in the street, gave a penetrating and searching glance into his face. He looked out of spirits. Miss Triquett noticed it directly, and her heart, which had been somewhat hardened against him, melted at once.

Jack and his wife made it up. Anne relented, and something of her better self brought her to meet him half-way. Once more the strange accustomed feeling came to him, on Sundays especially. Old Billy Hunsden came clopping into church just as usual. There was the clerk, with his toothless old warble joining in with the chirp of the charity-school children. The three rows of grinning little faces were peering at him from the organ-loft. There was the empty bench at the top, where the mistress sat throned in state; the marble rolled down in the middle of the second lesson, with all the children looking preternaturally innocent and as if they did not hear the noise; the old patches of colour were darting upon the pulpit cushion from St. Mary Magdalene's red scarf in the east window. These are all small things, but they had taken possession of my hero, John, one afternoon, who was preaching away the first Sunday after he had come back from his wedding-trip, hardly knowing what he said, but conscious of Anne's wistful gaze from the rectory pew, and of the curious eyes of all the old women in the free-seats, who dearly love a timely word, and who had made up their minds to be stirred up that Sunday. It was not a bad sermon, but it was of things neither the preacher nor his congregation cared to hear very much.

The Satirists of the Reformation.

SOME difference of opinion has always existed amongst men of letters as to the importance which ought to be attached to the work done by satire in the world's history. Mr. Hallam was inclined, we think, to underrate it ; which is the more remarkable since his own generation afforded a memorable instance of its influence. Not men of literature only, but the gravest politicians of both sides, were agreed that Béranger did more to overthrow the Bourbons than any other single Frenchman. And Béranger's simple instrument was, as he says himself, *satire chantée* ; he did his work solely by satirical song. The poet to whom he is oftenest compared, Burns, had not the stimulant of a revolution to give his wit a direction so thoroughly political. Nevertheless, Burns too produced a distinct social effect by a similar exercise of his talent. He helped to make Scotch fanaticism weak, by making it ludicrous ; and consigned "Holy Willie" and his comrades to the same ridiculous list in which Béranger placed the Jesuits of Charles Dix. Satire, it would seem, supplies an element which is necessary to the complete success of any historical movement. It enlists the worldly part of mankind in a cause, and makes them co-operate with the enthusiasts. It carries great questions into people's hours of amusement, and associates them with fun and hilarity. It represents, essentially, the common-sense view of affairs ; and thus acts as a check even on the extravagances of its own side. Accordingly, we hardly know a period of importance in the records of the race which has not left us some specimens of the satirical art. Dig where we will, satirical weapons are found ; and their shape and make throw a valuable light on the generations which used them. The loss of Aristophanes would have involved the loss of some of the most striking qualities of the Greek language, and of a thousand instructive details of Athenian life. The loss of Béranger would involve the loss of some of the most classic French that has been written since the days of La Fontaine and Racine ; and would blot out a chapter in the history of Parisian opinion and Parisian manners.

The satirists of whom we are now to speak are less known than any. For the most part they wrote in Latin, and the modern Latin writers of Europe hang suspended between the ancient and modern worlds without belonging to either. Nevertheless, there are symptoms that the literary character of the Reformation is now recognized more amply than it used to be, of which Mr. Seeböhm's late volume is one. The popular books on the subject make little account except of the preachers,—who, indeed, are usually spoken of as the Reformers proper. But before the preachers could do their work at all, the way had been prepared for them by scholars

and men of letters, humorists and wits. Reuchlin, Erasmus, Ulric von Hutten, Rabelais, Sir David Lindsay, and Buchanan,—these men and their friends were earlier in the field than the Luthers, Calvins, and Knoxes, and were of no less value in their own part of the fight. They supplied the ideas of the great revolution, and disseminated them amongst the middle and upper classes by whom it was made. They prevented it from becoming a mere mob movement, which must have destroyed civilization, and led to a reaction tenfold worse than that which actually took place. Nor do we think it of vital consequence that some of them, like Erasmus and our own More, never left the ancient Church at all. Their spirit did not the less work whether in the modification of the old institution, or the formation of the new. Rabelais, for instance, did his share of the business through the agency of successive generations. He was an ancestor of Molière, who was an ancestor of Béranger; and though France remains nominally Roman Catholic, its Catholicism is very different from what it would have been but for the wholesome Rabelaisian inspiration. And so with the good Erasmus. He detested schism, and every other kind of disorder. He was elderly and gouty when the stormy part of the Reformation began. He died in unity with the Holy See, and very much in bad odour with Luther and his friends. But not a grain of his Attic salt was lost to the cause of improvement; and the memory of his priestly character in the Church has long been merged in that of his higher character as a priest of letters. He was a scholar by nature; he was a priest only by accident. His tonsure is altogether hidden by his laurel.

Of the life of Erasmus a sketch was given in this Magazine some time ago, but our notice of his works was necessarily casual and brief. We do not disparage him by calling him a satirist, for comedy was one of the elements in which he lived; and a thousand jets of playful satire break out through the voluminous pages of his stately folios. His satire is of the Horatian rather than the Juvenalian school; pleasant, mirthful, pungent, rather than ferocious and biting. His predominant idea is to draw a contrast between the simple holiness of primitive Christianity and the corrupt fabric of his own time; and he points the contrast by humorous little delineations of contemporary theologians and monks, and humorous little hits at their pedantry, ignorance, and vices. It is characteristic of Erasmus that he did not write professed satires. He mixed his satire, like a leaven, with serious discussion or apparently harmless comedy. Thus, in the dedication of his edition of Jerome, he says:—"We kiss the old shoes and dirty handkerchiefs of the saints, and we neglect their books, which are the more holy and valuable reliques. We lock up their shirts and clothes in cabinets adorned with jewels . . . and leave their writings to mouldiness and vermin." And in the *Encomium Moriae*, or *Praise of Folly*, which he wrote in London after his visit to Italy—about 1508—he does not come to ecclesiastical abuses until he has run over many other kinds of human absurdity. It is then, with a

very quiet and sly irony—not the irony of a Swift—that he shows at what a disadvantage the Apostles would be for want of scholastic knowledge if brought face to face with the Scotists, Thomists, Albertists, &c. of his time. They piously consecrated the Eucharist, he says, but if interrogated as to the *terminus a quo*, and the *terminus ad quem*, or as to the moment of time when transubstantiation takes place—seeing that the words effecting it are *in fluxu*—they would never be able to answer with the acumen of the Scotists. Paul, he observes, defines faith and charity *parum magistraliter*. He and his brother Apostles care much more for these, and for good works, than for the *opus operans* and the *opus operatum*. Nor do they tell us whether charity be a substance or an accident, a created or an uncreated thing. It would be a good thing, Erasmus thinks, if all these scholastic sects could be put to use—by being sent out to fight the Turks. This branch of his satire is levelled at the old educational system, which was a vital part of the antique state of things, and which he and his friends, such as Budæus in France, and Reuchlin in Germany, were labouring to supersede by the classical literature,—the chief agent in the intellectual work of the Reformation. But he deals with less abstract matters presently, and complains that practical piety is left by the lay rulers of the world to the *plebs*. The *plebs*, he says, hand it over to the clergy as their business; the secular clergy hand it over to the regulars; the laxer regulars to the stricter ones; all of them together to the mendicants; and the mendicants to the Carthusians,—amongst whom alone piety lies buried, and so buried that it is scarcely ever to be seen! A happy illustration of the true Christian humility follows, where Erasmus reminds his readers that the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove, and not of an eagle or a kite. Such are a few of the most characteristic touches of the *Encomium Moris*, written when Erasmus was the guest of More (it is pleasant to remember that his very best friends were Englishmen), and illustrated by the pencil of Holbein with satirical engravings, which are repeated in the great edition of Le Clerc.

The *Colloquia* belong to a later period of the scholar's career; and besides their dramatic liveliness and literature, contain many amusing satirical passages,—especially against the monks, who were the favourite butts of the men of letters, or “humanists,” of that important age. It was they who hated the new literature with the deadliest hate—a hate which their ignorance of it well matched. It was their declamatory preaching that worked on the superstitious feelings of women and of the rabble. So their greasy gluttony, their brutal illiterateness, their greed for money, their secret riotousness in sin, were fair game for satirists of every kind; and Erasmus loved to handle them with the playful and elegant mockery which Horace had brought to bear on the sham Stoics of the Roman Empire. Opening the *Colloquia* at the dialogue *Funus*, we find mendicants of four orders assembled round the bed of a dying man. “What,” exclaims Marcolphus, hearing this, “so many vultures to one

carcass ! ” The mendicants, however, have a squabble in the hall, while the master of the house is in his last agony ; and representatives of a fifth order, the Cruciferi, having come in, they all set upon them unanimously. The superstitious old gentleman is finally laid on ashes in the habit of a Franciscan, and dies with a Dominican shouting consolation into one ear, and a Franciscan into the other. The description is too picturesque as a whole to be capable of being done justice to in such extracts as our limits permit. We wish only to illustrate the character of the satire of Erasmus, which ranged over a wide field of obsolete nuisances, —foolish pilgrimages, hypocritical funeral pomp, the extravagant adornment of saintly shrines, the superstitious locking-up of poor girls in convents, the scandalous brutalities of wars, and many more. Erasmus did not spare the dignitaries of the Church any more than the monks ; though among them were found some like our own Archbishop Warham, who were the steadiest friends of learning. “ If there is any labour to be undertaken,” says he, “ they leave it to Peter and Paul who have plenty of leisure ; but the splendour and pleasure they take to themselves.” One of the liveliest ecclesiastical sarcasms in the *Colloquia* occurs in the *Charon*, where he makes the old ferryman tell Alastor that the groves in the Elysian Fields have all been used up for burning the shades of the heretics —*exurendis haeticorum umbris* ! “ We have been obliged,” Charon adds, “ to go to the bowels of the earth for coals.” The whole dialogue is a happy adaptation of one of the classical traditions to modern ideas. Another and still more exquisite instance of this occurs in the *Convivium Religiosum*, where Erasmus says that he can never read such works as the *Phedo* of Plato without longing to say *Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis* ! Few men have owed more to the ancients than the Sage of Rotterdam ; but assuredly still fewer have paid them so much back.

The wit of Erasmus was not confined to his writings. He shot out many pleasant *bons mots* which flew over Europe ; and some of which stuck like barbs in the fat ribs of the bigots. “ The fire of Purgatory,” said he, “ is very useful to these fellows’ kitchens.” “ Luther has done two bad things,” he told the Elector Frederick ; “ he has attacked the crown of the pope and the bellies of the monks.” He expressed his wonder that the images did not work miracles when the mobs began to destroy them ; they had done so many when there was no need for it. The Lutherans themselves came in for their share of banter from the old humorist, whose care it was to keep an “ honest mean,” as Pope says, between the parties. It was observed that the first thing an ardent Reformer did on breaking with the Church was to get a wife ; so when people were speaking of the movement as “ a tragedy,” “ Nay,” said Erasmus, “ a comedy, —where the end is generally a wedding.” Such were some of the bubbles which rose to the surface of the veteran’s favourite burgundy as he sat in his latter years in Basle, looking out on the world with the solid sagacious face, and the large mouth, the delicate lines of which suggest sensibility and humour, so familiar to us all on the canvas of Holbein.

That Erasmus was the greatest of all the satirists of the Reformation, and the one who had most influence on Europe, no competent student of this branch of literature will deny. The place of honour next him belongs to another scion of the Teutonic race, the knightly wit, the daring adventurer, the free-living champion of the Gospel and of letters, Ulrich von Hutten. Hutten was twenty-three years younger than Erasmus, having been born—at his ancestral château of Stekelberg, on the Maine, of one of the noblest Franconian families—in 1488. He was sent to school as a boy at the Abbey of Fulda, from which he ran away to Cologne; and this was a characteristic commencement of his wandering existence. From Cologne he went to Frankfort-on-the-Oder, where he took his master's degree in arts. He is next found in the north of Germany, sustained by the aid of the Margrave of Brandenburg; and appears at Wittenberg in 1510. Here he composed his *Ars Versificatoria*, after which he wintered at Vienna, and proceeded in 1512 to study law at Pavia. But Pavia was besieged by the Swiss, and being ill-treated both by them and their French enemies, Hutten made for Bologna. About this period he was so poor that he enlisted for a time as a soldier in the Austrian army. Returning to Germany in 1514, he vainly paid his addresses to the Emperor Maximilian; but was received into the service of De Stein, Chancellor to the Elector of Mayence. After a second visit to Italy, he was laureated by the Emperor, and taken into the employment of the Elector of Mayence, who sent him on a mission to Paris. Soon after, he joined the confederates who had leagued themselves against the Duke of Wurtemberg, the murderer of John von Hutten, his cousin; and with them he served a campaign. In 1519, he was again in Mayence, from which he was expelled for his violent writings against Rome; and he attached himself to Franz von Sickingen, a kindred spirit, who perished in the German feuds of 1523. Hutten fled to Switzerland, and died in the island of Ufnau, on the Lake of Zurich, in 1525.

Such is a brief summary of the career of a man whose life was at once a romance and a comedy; who, half soldier of fortune and half literary adventurer, and living, it would seem, much in the fashion of both classes, joined the Lutherans from a point of view of his own, and did essential service to their cause. He was a reformer, partly as a humanist, in the interest of letters; and partly as a German, who disdained to be governed in spiritual matters from the other side of the Alps. His talent was essentially a satirical one, ranging from pungent eloquence, in such works as his dialogue, *Vadiscus* or *Trias Romana*, to dramatic invention and rich ludicrous unctuous humour, in the famous *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum*, the appearance of which makes an epoch in the history of the Reformation.

The fate of this celebrated satire ("the great national satire of Germany," as Sir William Hamilton has called it) in our own literature has been curious. Whenever it has not been neglected, it has been the subject of the most singular blunders—the last, though perhaps the least

surprising, being those of the bookmakers of our own day. When it was reprinted in Queen Anne's time, Steele made precisely the same mistake about it which had been made by British Dominicans and Franciscans, two centuries before, to the vast amusement of Sir Thomas More. He took the Epistles, in which the theologians of that age are made most inimitably to expose themselves, for genuine and serious ; and laughed at the block-heads in perfect good faith. Our other English humorists seem generally to have passed them over ; and it was reserved for Sir William Hamilton, whose mighty erudition embraced literature and philosophy indifferently, to do them full justice in the *Edinburgh Review* for March, 1831. Since then the Germans have bestirred themselves in the cause of Ulric von Hutten's memory ; an elaborate edition of his works has appeared at Leipsic ; and the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum* are easily accessible, in good forms, to all who wish to acquaint themselves with one of the memorable satires of that day.*

The *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum* first saw the light in 1515-17, eventful years, when the war between the old and the new filled every university town in Europe with clamour, and when Luther was gradually warming himself up to the pitch at which he broke finally with the Holy See. The immediate cause of their appearance was the persecution of the celebrated scholar, Reuchlin, by the theologians of Cologne, which disputed with Louvain the dubious honour of being the head-quarters of all that was obsolete, narrow, and obscurantist in European thought. Among Reuchlin's many claims to respect his Hebrew scholarship was one of the chief ; and it was on this side that he was attacked by the authorities of the university viz. Tungern, dean of the faculty of theology ; Hoogstraten, the prior of the Dominican convent ; and Ortuinus Gratius (Ortuin you Graes), the hero of the *Epistola*, whose name will live in comic literature as long as that of the sausage-seller of Aristophanes, the Pantilius of Horace, the Og of Dryden, the Sporus of Pope, the Tartuffe of Molière, or the Marquis de Carabas of Béranger. The tool used by these bigots against the illustrious Reuchlin was one John Pfefferkorn, of whom Erasmus says that from a wicked Jew he had become a most wicked Christian — *ex scelerato Judæo sceleratissimum Christianum.*† Four treatises were issued against the Jewish religion in the name of this renegade ; and an edict was obtained from the Emperor condemning to the flames every Hebrew book existing, with the sole exception of the Bible. Reuchlin, whose opinion had been asked as to the policy of this measure, condemned it, and was immediately attacked by Pfefferkorn. Reuchlin replied ; when forty-three propositions extracted from his answer were condemned by the dean, and he was summoned to recant. The controversy immediately assumed European importance. “Not only in

* The edition of the *Epistola* before us is a very handy little volume, printed by Teubner of Leipsic in 1858, and issued here by Messrs. Williams and Norgate that year.

† ERASMUS: *Op. iii. 1641.*

Germany," says Sir William Hamilton, "but in Italy, France, and England, a confederation was organized between the friends of humane learning. The cause of Reuchlin became the cause of letters: Europe was divided into two hostile parties; the powers of light stood marshalled against the powers of darkness." Hoogstraten cited Reuchlin before the Court of Inquisition at Metz, and in spite of his appeal to the Pope, burned his books. The Pope appointed the Bishop of Spires to settle the matter, and he settled it in favour of the scholar. Hoogstraten and his friends now appealed in their turn to the Pope; and it was at this stage of the dispute, before Rome finally decided against Reuchlin's persecutors, that the first series of the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum* burst upon the world.

The plan of the satire is simple, but dramatic and effective. There had been recently published a collection of the letters of "illustrious" men to Reuchlin; and Ortinius Gratius is supposed to publish those of his own friends, whom he modestly calls "obscure" men, in his turn. The obscure ones, accordingly, speak for themselves in all the freedom of confidential communication; and never did such a curious set of marionettes gambol before the world as those of which Ulric von Huttent and his colleagues in the task pull the strings. Now it is Magister Bernhardus Plumilegus writing from Leipsic; now it is Magister Petrus Hafemusius writing from Nurenberg; or Magister Hiltbrandus Mammaceus from Tübingen; or Magister Gerhardus Schirruglius, from Mayence. But a family likeness runs through the whole of them. A stolid brutal ignorance, enlivened by the most unaffected self-conceit; a bigotry never modified by the shadow of a doubt; a sly, oily sensualism, to which the very hypocrisy accompanying it seems to lend additional piquancy—these are the common features of the race. Their mere Latin is delicious by its homely barbarism; and this is one chief charm of the letters to which no translation can do justice. It is especially effective when the writer communicates any of the poems produced on his side of the Reuchlin controversy, such as the following, suggested by the fact that the University of Paris had declared for Cologne:—

Qui vult legere hereticas pravitates
 Et cum hoc discere bonas latinitates,
 Ille debet emere Parrhiensium acta
 Et scripta de Parrhisia nuper facta,
 Quomodo Reuchlin in fide erravit,
 Sicut magister noster Tungarus doctriniliter probavit.
 Illa vult magister Ortinius legere
 Gratias, in hac alma universitate,
 Et cum hoc textum ubique glosare
 Necnon quedam notabilia in margine notare,
 Et vult arguere pro et contra,
 Sicut fecerunt Theologi in Parrhisia,
 * * * * *

Ut sciunt fratres Carmelite
 Et alii qui vocantur Jacobite.*
 * * * * *

The perfect contentment of the crew at once with their dog-Latin and their ignorance of the humanities generally, is a favourite point with Hutten and his friends. "He writes Greek, too," says one of them about Erasmus, "which he ought not to do, because we are Latins and not Greeks. *If he wants to write what nobody can understand, why does he not write Italian, and Bohemian, and Hungarian?*"* "These poets," another writer says, "are truly reprehensible; and when anybody writes anything, they say—'See there, see there, that is not good Latin!' and they come here with their new terms, and confound the ancient grammar."† "Our masters ought to issue a mandate," observes Petrus Lapp, licentiate, "that no jurist or poet shall write anything in theology, and shall not introduce *that new Latinity* into sacred theology, as John Reuchlin has done, and a certain person, as I hear, who is called the *Proverbia Erasmi* (!) . . . If they say that they know Greek and Hebrew learning, you have the answer that such learning is not cared for by theologians, because Sacred Scripture is sufficiently translated, and we do not need other translations. The Greeks have gone away from the Church: therefore, also, they ought to be held as enemies, and their knowledge ought not to be practised (*practicari*) by Christians."‡ Another worthy, Magister Bartholomeus Kuckuck, confirms the erudite Lapp's view by insisting that "Greek is not of the essence of Sacred Scripture;" while Dominus Volwinius de Monteflascon remarks, for his part, that Paul having said that the Greeks were always liars, their literature was necessarily nothing but a lie. Virgil having been mentioned in the presence of one of the correspondents of Ortuius Gratius, he tells, with much complacency, how he exclaimed—"What do I care for that pagan?" That so much of the fun of the *Epistola* should be derived from the illiterate character of the Popish theologians, shows how essential a part learning was of the whole movement of the Reformation. Europe was, in fact, *deodorised* by the free dispersion of the delightful essences long hidden in the buried caskets of classical literature.

As may be supposed, the *Epistola* *Obscurorum Virorum* throw a good deal of light on the social habits of the clergy and monks of the old days. There seems to have been no little beer and wine swilling amongst them, —the Greek wine being held in an esteem which (as we have just seen) they did not by any means extend to the Greek language. In one of the letters § occurs the famous ecclesiastical story of the divine who on first tasting "lachryma Christi," breathed a pious wish that our Lord had wept in his native land. With regard to the morality attributed to the body in other respects, it is as bad as bad can be; and it is exposed with the freedom of Rabelais, and with hardly less than his gross jolly humour. The satire of the *Epistola* is indeed perfectly unrestrained. That Ortuius

* *Ep. Ob. Vir.* i. 148.

† *Ib.* ii. 265.

‡ *Ep. Ob. Vir.* ii. 270-1.

§ Vol. ii. p. 211. We always quote from the edition of 1858, referred to in a previous note.

Gratius was the illegitimate son of a priest, and the nephew of a hangman, is evidently thought an excellent jest; while an intimate relation between him and the wife of the renegade Jew, Pfefferkorn, is assumed as a known fact, and made the subject of a score of playful allusions. Plainer speaking on all this side of life than that of the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum* is not to be found in satirical literature from Aristophanes downwards; while Erasmus, though still too free for our modern tastes, is reserved, and even prudish in comparison. The exact amount of truth in all these charges of licentiousness cannot, we suppose, be determined; but they come from so many different countries, and such different men, that it is impossible to suppose them mere libels. The very fact that the *Epistola* were ever mistaken by the Romish party for a *bonâ fide* body of correspondence shows that the immorality which they assume in their writers did not necessarily prove their fictitious character in the eyes of the orthodox. Yet the orthodox were ready to admit their barbarism in point of style. "It is well worth seeing," Sir Thomas More writes to Erasmus, in October, 1516, "how much the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum* please everybody,—the learned in sport, but the unlearned in earnest, who, while we laugh, think that we are laughing only at the style, which they do not defend, but say that it is compensated by the weight of the thoughts, and that a most beautiful sword lies hidden in the rude scabbard." * Erasmus himself, in a letter to Martinus Lipsius, not only corroborates this, but adds an almost incredible anecdote about the delusion. "A Dominican prior in Brabant," he relates, "wishing to make himself known to the patricians, bought a heap of these books, and sent them to the chiefs of the order, never doubting that they were written in its honour."

"Yet these are they," adds Erasmus, "who are the Atlases, as they think themselves, of the tottering church, . . . these pronounce on the books of Erasmus, and according to their good will, we are Christians or heretics." †

Erasmus, like the rest of the cultivated world, had been mightily amused by the fun of the *Epistola*; and there is an old story that he laughed so heartily in reading them as to break an imposthume from which he was suffering at the time. But Erasmus did not approve the famous satire, the seathing severity of which, its riotous freedom, and its daring liberties with living names, were quite out of keeping with the tone of his own Horatian and Addisonian pleasantry. He was particularly annoyed that his name should be used so freely in the second volume; and he must have winced at the pungent little sentence in one of the letters,—*Erasmus est homo pro se!* It is painful to remember that the gallant and brilliant Ulric von Hutten died his enemy; one of the latest pieces of work he did in the world having been to write an attack upon Erasmus. Though never very intimate or much together, they had been friends; and perhaps the most valuable portrait of Sir Thomas More that we have

* ERASMUS: *Op.* iii. 1575. † *Ib.* p. 1110.

is in one of the letters of Erasmus to Hutten. The old scholar found himself obliged to take up the cudgels in self-defence against his quondam friendly acquaintance ; and his *Spongia* is a document of much value to all who are interested in his biography.

When the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum* were amusing the world in 1516-1517, there was a young Franciscan friar in Fontenay-le-Comte in Lower Poitou, who, we may be certain, watched the dispute with eagerness, and read the letters with sympathy and enjoyment. He had been born in the fair Touraine, which he loved to call "the garden of France," a few years before Ulric von Hutten saw the light in Franconia. He had the deep-rooted literary instincts of the Reformatory party ; and his brother Cordeliers looked askance at a man who spent days and nights on the heretical study of Greek ; and who combined with the most solid sagacity a satirical humour that has been rarely equalled in the annals of mankind. Francis Rabelais has not left us in doubt what his feelings were about the persecution of Reuchlin. In his queer catalogue of the books which Pantagruel found in the library of St. Victor, we have : *Tarrabalationes Doctorum Coloniensium adversus Reuchlin* ; and *Ars honeste — in societate, per Marcum Ortuinum*. These are hints only ; but a hint from Rabelais is worth a chapter from other men. He had to do his work by hints ; by buffoonery ; in masquerade. As, according to an old story, Aristophanes appeared in one of his own comedies with his face disguised with wine-lees, so Rabelais disguised himself through his whole comic romance in a curiously similar way. He is a wine-bibber, a Shakspearian fool of literature, a droll without decency or morals, and whose filth is only kept from fetidity by the clear stream of humour running through it. He is all this, we say—to the vulgar eye. But his filth is manure which helps to make crops grow. "I could write a treatise in praise of the moral elevation of Rabelais' work," says Coleridge, "which would make the Church stare and the conventicle groan, and yet would be truth and nothing but the truth." Doubtless, this view of the great poet's is often applied with exaggeration to the lesser humorists. A Dutch commentator once described Petronius as *sanctissimus vir*. And, not to see in the roystering animalism and gross humour of Rabelais the effect of a temperament to which these qualities were natural, and to which they gave pleasure, as well as a comic mask put on to conceal the real face from inquisitors and heresy-hunters, would be, we think, to show ignorance of human nature. Disguises are numerous, and he who takes a ludicrous and obscene one, takes it because he has a relish for the ludicrous and the obscene. But still Coleridge's doctrine about Rabelais is substantially right. Look steadily at his eyes, in spite of the mask, and you see in them the depth of a wise, earnest, and kindly soul. Thus, the letter of Gargantua to Pantagruel (book 2nd, chap. 8) is a model of sense and piety ; and every now and then such grave passages occur through the whole work—to be silenced immediately afterwards by the

gros rire *Tourangeau*, which has made so many hearts merry during the last three hundred years. Not even the wisdom or the object of Rabelais, however, do so much to make the reader forgive what must be called his nastiness, as the essential kindness and geniality of his jolly fun. This element belongs rather to the early than to the later periods of French literature. The satire of Voltaire, for instance, is generally a sneer—not, like that of Rabelais, a laugh.

We make little account of the various theories by which some commentators have attempted to give real historical names to the persons and places of Rabelais' comic fiction. He, no doubt, made references to his contemporaries, now and then, just as Swift did to the statesmen of his time in dealing with Lilliput and Blefuscus. But to expect exactitude in such details is to take a narrow view of the scope of the work. The general object of Rabelais seems to have been to forward the progress of France, by a broadly comic satire of all that retarded it, not in the ecclesiastical world only, but in the worlds of education, of law, medicine, and social life. The Reformation, we must remember, was not only a religious revolution, but involved changes of every other kind; and produced not merely new churches, but new states of society. Rabelais, thus, did a great deal for the modern world, in spite of his never having—like the satirists of Germany—helped to bring about a “reformation” of the French Church, in the technical sense which that word has acquired. Nay, we do not even know that he had any such wish; and he may, like the often misunderstood Erasmus, have had no ambition beyond that of improving the religious system of Europe, without breaking its unity. But he was less fortunate than the German satirists, for his spirit did not really achieve its full triumph till '89—a triumph accompanied by horrors which the good old patriotic humorist could not but have deplored.

Like the author of the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum*, Rabelais loved well to flesh his satire in the members of the monastic orders. Nowhere is his satire so direct and intelligible as when he is dealing with monks—the peculiar enemies of scholars then, as they had been of the minstrels in earlier ages. A passage or two shall illustrate this. We quote from the incomparable translation of Sir Thomas Urquhart, one of the best translations ever done of any book.* Sir Thomas was a Pantagruelist himself, of no mean magnitude, in life and in death too. For one of his treatises contains a pedigree of the Urquharts of Cromarty, without a break from Adam; and he died in a fit of laughter on hearing of the Restoration of Charles II.—overwhelmed by a sense of the absurdity and uncertainty of human affairs:—

“ But if you conceive how an ape in a family is always mocked and provokingly incensed, you shall easily apprehend how monks are shunned of all men both young and old. The ape keeps not the house, as a dog

* Yet it has been often maintained that the Scotch have no humour.

doth; he draws not in the plough, as the ox; he yields neither milk nor wool, as the sheep; he carrieth no burthen, as a horse doth. That which he doth is only to spoil and defile all, which is the cause wherefore he hath of all men mocks, frumperies, and bastinadoes.

“ After the same manner a monk—I mean those lither, idle, lazy monks—doth not labour and work, as do the peasant and artificer; doth not ward and defend the country, as doth the man of war; cureth not the sick and diseased, as the physician doth; doth neither preach nor teach, as do the Evangelical doctors and schoolmasters; doth not import commodities and things necessary for the commonwealth, as the merchant doth. Therefore is it that by and of all men they are hooted at, hated, and abhorred. ‘ Yea, but,’ said Grangousier, ‘ they pray to God for us.’ ‘ Nothing less,’ answered Gargantua. ‘ True it is that with a tingle tangle jangling of bells they trouble and disgust all their neighbours about them.’ ‘ Right,’ said the monk; ‘ a mass, a matin, a vesper well rung are half said. They mumble out great store of legends and psalms, by them not at all understood; they say many paternosters, interlarded with Ave-Marias, without thinking upon or apprehending the meaning of what it is they say, which truly I call mocking of God, and not prayers. But so help them God, as they pray for us, and not for being afraid to lose their victuals, their manchets, and good fat pottage.’ ”—*Gargantua*, book i. chap. xl.

“ A woman that is neither fair nor good, to what use serves she ? ” is a question put in a subsequent chapter. “ To make a nun of,” says Gargantua; and soon after we have the inscription upon the great gate of the famous Rabelaisian abbey, the Abbey of Theleme :—

Here enter not vile bigots, hypocrites,
Externally devoted apes, base snites,
Puff up, wry-necked beasts, worse than the Huns,
Or Ostrogoths, forerunners of baboons:
Cursed snakes, dissembled varlets, seeming sancts,
Slipshod caffards, beggars pretending wants,
Fat chuff-cats, smell-feast knockers, doltish gulls,
Out-strouting cluster-fists, contentious bulls,
Fomenters of divisions and debates,
Elsewhere, not here, make sale of your deceits.

Another instance of plain-speaking in this First Book is the account of Grangousier’s interview with the Pilgrims in the forty-fifth chapter.

“ ‘ What went you to do at St. Sebastian ? ’ Grangousier asks.

“ ‘ We went,’ said Sweer-to-go, ‘ to offer up unto that saint our vows against the plague.’ ”

“ ‘ Ah, poor men,’ said Grangousier, ‘ do you think that the plague comes from St. Sebastian ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Yes, truly,’ answered Sweer-to-go; ‘ our preachers tell us so, indeed.’ ”

“ ‘ But is it so ? ’ said Grangousier; ‘ do the false prophets teach you such abuses ? Do they thus blaspheme the saints and holy-men of God as

to make them like unto the devils who do nothing but hurt unto mankind,—as Homer writeth that the plague was sent into the camp of the Greeks by Apollo, and as the poets feign a great rabble of Vejoves and mischievous gods.'"

Before the Pilgrims are dismissed, comes a passage which cannot be transcribed, on the probable consequences of their absence from home ; for "the very shadow of the steeple of an Abbey," we are told, "is fruitful." Rabelais seems, here, to have been thinking of a celebrated epigram by Beza, who was a wit as well as a reformer, and not the least free-spoken wit of those free-spoken times. Toleno, a rich old man who is childless, goes on a pilgrimage to Loretto, to the Holy Sepulchre, and to Mount Sinai, to pray heaven for offspring. He is away from home three years ; and on returning, finds that his petition has been heard, and that he is the father of three fine children. There were grave and good men enough to keep the freedom of Rabelais in countenance ; and doubtless it might have been said of Beza, as Johnson said of Prior, that his *Epigrams* were "a lady's book."—"No, sir, *Prior* is a lady's book. No lady is ashamed to have it standing in her library."

The greater vagueness of the fourth and fifth books of Rabelais makes them, we cannot but think, less delightful than the first three. They have the sort of inferiority to them which the Laputa of Swift has to his Lilliput and Brobdingnag. The wit of the great master plays through thick vapours of allegory in which it is almost lost. This is especially true of Book Fifth. The Ringing Island may well be the Church of Rome ; and the Popehawk, Cardinhawks, Bishawks, &c., are readily to be recognized. But as the voyage of Pantagruel and his companions proceeds, clouds gather more and more round Rabelais' meaning, and his satire flashes in transient lightning gleams, which are gone before one has time to enjoy them. Indeed, though essentially a satirist, and of the class to which this essay is devoted, he is less read, now that the changes which he helped to bring about in Europe have become familiar possessions, for his satire than for his humour. It is the clear cutting French sense, and the rich oily comedy of his pictures of human life, so grotesque but so real, for which his countrymen love him. How he stands with the mass of the French now it is not in our power to say ; but we think that there has been an increased interest in him amongst their men of letters since the great burst of literary activity which followed on the fall of the First Empire. The vivid and potent Balzac, so much less known on this side of the Channel than he deserves to be, loved to speak of Rabelais as his master ; and in his joyous moods, Balzac, with his childlike hilarity, often recalled to his friends the traditional image of his compatriot of Touraine.

It is a somewhat strange fact that England should not have contributed a classic name to the list of satirists of the Reformation. The *Utopia* is a philosophical rather than a satirical romance ; and the attacks of Skelton on Wolsey were personal rather than religious or critical. There were,

no doubt, casual ballads and pasquils written on both sides of the struggling powers; but our business is not with this small change of wit, this pistol-shooting of war, on the present occasion. For British satirists in the cause of the great revolution of the sixteenth century, who have left lasting names in the history of letters, we must go to the north of the Tweed. The Scotch can boast as their share of the band of writers who, like the band of the Constable Bourbon, sealed the walls of Rome, a satirist who was a poet, and a satirist who was a scholar.

Unluckily for the fame of the older Scottish writers, they have come down in *two* dead languages—Scots and Latin; and the satirists of whom we are now to speak represent each one of them. Sir David Lindsay, of the Mount,—whom, by a deliberate anachronism, Sir Walter, in *Marmion*, has made Lyon King of Arms at the time of Flodden,—is perhaps the most readable of the old Scots poets still. He is fresh and naïf, with a keen pictorial wit, a genuine good nature, and a wholesome contempt for all baseness, cruelty, and pretence. Born the representative of a Fifeshire branch of the Lords Lindsay of the Byres, at some unknown date towards the close of the fifteenth century, he was employed young in the household of the Stewart kings. He was usher to James V. during that prince's childish years; and having been dismissed that employment with a pension, was afterwards made Lyon;—it is supposed about 1527. As chief of the Scottish heralds, he was connected with several embassies, of which one was a mission to Charles V., in 1531, on the subject of the Scottish trade with the Netherlands; and he was also a member of the Scottish Parliament. Our business, however, is not with his public life, nor even with his poetry proper, which has a great deal of pleasant sweetness about it; but with the satires by which he aided the growing spirit of revolt against the old Church. A satirist was wanted in this cause, in Scotland, if anywhere; for in no country had the Romish clergy a larger share of the national wealth, and in none were they more bigoted in belief, or dissolute in morals. The historian Robertson calculates that they possessed “little less than one half of the property of the nation;” and observes, from the public records, that “a greater number of letters of *legitimation* was granted during the first thirty years after the Reformation than during the whole period that has elapsed since that time.” These were procured by the sons of the clergy, who, having inherited benefices which their fathers were allowed to retain, were anxious to escape from the stain of bastardy. The blood of the prelates of old days flows in the veins of the best Scottish families; for instance, it is an interesting little fact that Byron was descended, through his mother's house—the Gordons—from the famous Cardinal Beaton. Knox's account of the last hours of that grandee's life, in which a certain “Mistress Marion Ogilvy” figures, will never be forgotten by those who have read his singularly quaint and powerful *History*.

The satire of Sir David Lindsay, like that of Erasmus, is of the playful kind. It is not the satire of indignation, but of merriment. It is as free

as the satire of the *Epistola* in some respects, but is less personal and less gross. There is a real vein of natural fun in his little poem, "Kittie's Confession," where the gravity of the confessor is a touch in the spirit of the *Tartuffe*. Kittie narrates that the good man did not direct her to lead a pure life, or to trust in the merits of Christ, but solely to follow certain observances :—

Bot gave me penance ilk ane day,
Ane Ave Maria for to say,
And Frydayis fyve na fishee to eit,—
Bot butter and eggis are better meit ;
And with ane plak to by ane messe
Fra drunken Schir Jhone Latynless.

* * * *

Quhen scho was telland as scho wist,
The curate Kittie wald have kist ;
But yit ane countendance he bure
Degist, devote, daign and demure.
Said he, have you any wrongous gear,
Said she, I stole a peck of beir,
Said he, that should restored be,
Therefore deliver it to me !

* * * *

And mekil Latyne he did mummill,
I heard nothing but hummill bummill.

The chief satirical work of Sir David Lindsay was a drama called, *Ane Pleasant Satire of the Three Estaitis*, which was performed before the Court in 1535, and in 1539. This drama took nine hours in the acting ; but there was an interval allowed for refreshment during the course of it, which the Scots of that generation were by no manner of means likely to neglect availing themselves of. Some of the characters are real, and some allegorical, and both are made instruments for exposing ecclesiastical abuses, particularly the dilatory proceedings of the Consistory Court. A poor fellow "Pauper" who had lent his mare to an acquaintance who drowned her, seeks redress from this Court ; "bot," complains he—

Bot, or they came half way to *concludendum*,
The feind ane plak was left for to defend him.

* * * *

Of *pronunciandum* they made me wondrous fain,
Bot I got never my gude gray mare again !

One of the chief complaints against the Scots prelates was that they never preached, and "the dumb dog the bishop" became a favourite term of abuse among the Protestant clergy. Sir David notices this neglect after his own fashion in a dialogue in his play between the allegorical personages, Gude-Counsall and Spiritualitie :—

GUDE-COUNSALL.

Ane bishop's office is to be ane preacher.
And of the law of God ane public teacher.

SPIRITUALITIE.

Friend, quhare find ye that we suld prechouris be ?

GUDE-COUNSALL.

Luke what St. Paul writes unto Timothie,—
Tak thare the buke, let see gif ye can spell.

SPIRITUALITIE.

I never red that, therefore reid it yourself.

A pardoner, with relics to sell, is also a figure of some prominence in the *Satire of the Three Estaitis*. He comes on the stage complaining that the sale of his goods is much interfered with by the circulation of the English New Testament; but proceeds to solicit purchases for some sufficiently remarkable wares:—

My patent pardouns ye may see,
Can fra the Can of Tartarie,
Weill seal'd with oster-schellis.
Thocht ye haif na contritioun,
Ye sall haif full remissioun,
With help of bukes and bellis.

* * * *

Heir is ane cord, baith gret and lang,
Quhilk hangit Johne the Armistrang,
Of gude hemp soft and sound:
Gude haly pepill, I stand for'd
Quhaver bein hangit with this cord
Neidis never to be dround.
The culm of Sanct Bryd's kow,
The gruntill of Sanct Antonis sow,
Quhilk bure his haly bell:
Quha ever he be heiris this bell clink,
Giff me ane ducat for till drink,
He sall never gang to hell,
Without he be of Beliall borne:—
Maisters, trow ye that this be scorne?
Cum win this pardoun, cum.

In spite of all obsoleteness of language and subject, the true spirit of comedy makes its presence felt here. Sir David Lindsay is a rude Scottish Aristophanes; but the genius for dramatic creation which budded in him never came to flower in the cold air of Northern Protestantism. Scotland has never had a dramatic literature, for we suppose nobody now believes in the frigid and unnatural trash of Home's *Douglas*. This is partly due to the fanaticism of the country; and partly to its poverty; but another element must be taken into account in these matters,—the almost constant want of literary attainments and literary sympathy among the modern Scottish clergy. Much as literature did for the Reformation in Scotland as elsewhere, the clergy have done astonishingly little to repay the debt. Yet among Scotch men of letters the memory of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount holds its own:

Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindsay of the Mount
Lord Lyon King at Arms!

The reforming war was also carried on in Scotland by satirical ballads. We should much like to quote one which the curious reader will find in Dr. Irving's excellent *History of Scottish Poetry*, and of which the *refrain* or "ower-word" is :—

Hay trix, trim goe trix under the greene-wode tree.

But this ballad is too long,—and we may add that it is also too *broad*, for quotation here, even supposing that such ballads came, as they do not, within our present plan. That their sting and danger, as well as that of other satire, was felt by the orthodox, is proved by an order of the provincial council convoked by Archbishop Hamilton in 1549. The council directed every ordinary to make strict inquiry within his diocese, "whether any person had in his possession certain books of rhymes of vulgar songs, containing scandalous reflections on the clergy, together with other heretical matter;" and to read or keep them was an offence to be punished by Act of Parliament. But it was now too late to effect the object for which such Acts were passed; and twenty years afterwards, the Archbishop was hanged on a gibbet and embalmed in an epigram.

The only Scot of that age entitled to figure in our list by the side of Lindsay was one who first made the literary genius of his country known to Europe, and who in modern times has been persistently and inexcusably neglected,—so much so, that he lies, without even a tombstone to mark the spot, in the churchyard of the Greyfriars in Edinburgh. George Buchanan—*poetarum sui seculi facile princeps*, as a long list of scholars recognized him to be, from Scaliger to Ruddiman—was younger than Lindsay, but had reached his thirtieth year before the death of Erasmus. His youth in St. Andrews and in Paris was a period of hard study and hard struggling with poverty, after which he became tutor to a natural son of James V.—about 1534. Already—he was now twenty-eight—he had written a poem against the Franciscans; and a few years afterwards, James, having formed an ill opinion of their sincerity towards him in the matter of a certain rumoured conspiracy, requested Buchanan to compose a satire against the order. Buchanan knew his men, and hesitating between offending either them or the king, produced a brief and ambiguous composition. James was not satisfied with this, and demanded something sharp and pointed—*acre et aculeatum*. The result was the *Franciscanus*, one of the most vigorous Latin satires of the century. Soon after, Buchanan learned that his life was sought by Cardinal Beatoun, who had offered the king money for it. He was sentenced to exile and imprisoned, but escaped while his jailers were asleep, and got away to England and the Continent. This was in 1539. He remained abroad more than twenty years, leading a life of much variety. Suspicion of heresy drove him from Paris; the plague drove him from Bordeaux. He went away to Lisbon to teach the classics; but there, too, the fatal odour of heterodoxy clung to him. He was imprisoned in a monastery, where he spent his time on his immortal Latin version of the Psalms. Quitting

the Tagus in a vessel that had put in there on her way to England from Crete, he landed in London, which he left for his favourite Paris. He was now for the next five years tutor to a son of Marshal Brissac, with whom he resided a good deal in Italy. He returned to Scotland about the time that Queen Mary did, in 1560; joined the party of the Regent Murray; was tutor to young James VI., and held other important appointments; and died in Edinburgh in 1582, in his seventy-seventh year.

The most valuable books of Buchanan are his version of the Psalms, and his *Rerum Scoticarum Historia*; but his satires are very excellent, and must have helped to bring the men of the ancient system into a wholesome and desirable contempt. The *Franciscanus* holds the first place amongst them. It is a Juvenalian satire in sonorous hexameters of great swing and flow; for Buchanan was almost equally at home in every form of Latin composition, from the sweet ripple of elegiacs to the stormy roll of indignant heroics. He places himself in the position of one who is dissuading a friend from entering the Franciscans, and proceeds to lay bare their character and habits. They are recruited, he says, from those who have no means at home; or who have angry stepmothers, and severe fathers and masters; or who are lazy, and cold to all the attractions of the muses. The order to such is a harbour of refuge and of ignoble ease. Some look after the door, and some after the kitchen. One digs in the garden; another is employed to trick widows. The duller sort are sent to dupe the rural vulgar; to give apples to the boys, and amulets to the girls, whose heads they fill with the most superstitious fancies. The dullest blockhead assumes the appearance of wisdom when he has become one of these friars, and learns to humbug the world; and in his old age may proceed to teach the art to young beginners. He will teach him how to make a judicious use of confession, and to plunder well those whose secret thoughts and deeds have become his property; how to lure innocent virgins into sin; and how, if any one resolutely declines communion with the sect, to earwig his servants, and try to get up accusations against him,—especially if his life should prove irreproachable, the accusation of heresy. A great deal more advice of the kind is given, and a story told of an adventure which had evidently befallen Buchanan himself on the Garonne. One of the brothers was travelling in company with a woman who fell into labour in the vessel; and he abandoned her to her fate, running away amidst the confusion caused by the event at the landing-place. Buchanan tells the story in the person of an old Franciscan; and, with admirable irony, makes him conclude by saying:—"Young and strong as I then was, I could hardly silence the murmurs of the people, often though I execrated the deed, and swore that the offender was some Lutheran lying hidden under the name of our holy sect!"

We do not find in the satirical portions of Buchanan's writings the Erasmian vein of Sir David Lindsay, or the rollicking humour of Rabelais, nor even the intermediate kind of pleasantry, smacking of both, of the

Epistola Obscurorum Virorum. His fun is grim; and his abuse hearty. He is of the Juvenalian and Swiftian school of satire; a good hard proud Scots gentleman, whose keen feeling for classical beauty has given him elegance but not gentleness. There was nothing of what is now called "gushing" about George, any more than about those similar types of Scot, Smollett and Lockhart. He had much love for his own friends; much humour and feeling at bottom; but very little compassion for fools, rascals, or personal enemies. Many of his epigrams are bitter enough; and we shall transcribe a couple of them from a recent translation :—

ON THE MONKS OF ST. ANTONY.

When living, thou, St. Antony,
As swine-herd kept thy swine;
Now, dead, thou keep'st, St. Antony,
This herd of monks of thine.

The monks as stupid are as they,
As fond of dirt and prog;
In dumbness, torpor, ugliness,
Each monk is like each hog.

So much agrees 'tween herd and herd,
One point would make all good,—
If but thy monks, St. Antony,
Had acorns for their food!

ON PONTIFF PIUS.

Heaven he had sold for money; earth he left in death as well;
What remains to Pontiff Pius?—nothing that I see but hell!

Buchanan the latest, is also the last of the satirists on whom we have undertaken to offer some criticisms in this paper. It has been seen that the Low Countries, Germany, France, and Scotland, each produced within the compass of about a century satirists whose names have become classical, and whose powers were exerted in the same direction. The exact value of their services to the cause of divine truth and human enlightenment cannot be estimated; but it was undoubtedly great. The friends of the cause valued them; its foes feared them. They were nearly all persecuted; they were all, without exception, we think, libelled. Two of them were, in ignorance however, grossly misrepresented by succeeding generations of their own friends and countrymen. Francis Rabelais was made the traditional hero of a score of foolish anecdotes, apocryphal, obscene, and profane. George Buchanan became, in the eyes of the Scottish peasantry, the king's fool of a past age; and chap-books, filled with the dirtiest stories about him, circulated by thousands among the cottages of his native land.

The last historical fact is only amusing. But there were other conditions common to these men of great importance, which may be well commended to the attention of those who are inclined to underrate

satirists generally, and to that of the ordinary comic writers of our own time. These satirists of the Reformation were all scholars and thinkers to a man : not wits only, still less buffoons, but invariably among the best-read men, and the most vigorous manly intellects of their generation. Erasmus towered over the whole century ; and by universal admission, Buchanan did more skilfully than any writer what every writer of the period was trying to do ; while Hutten was recognized along the whole length of the Rhine as one of the most accomplished men in Germany ; and Rabelais ranked from the first among the most learned men in France. What is equally worthy of notice, no solid charge has ever been proved against the characters of any of the satirists of the Reformation. Hutten was probably not the soberest man in Europe, but he was generous, and faithful, and brave, and true. Erasmus was loved by the best men then living ; and Rabelais and Lindsay trusted by the chief personages of their respective kingdoms. As for the silly lies which were once disseminated against Buchanan by such writers as Father Garasse, they are no longer repeated even by Popish malignity. The lies and the liars have passed into a common obscurity.

The study of such writers would seem, we may say in conclusion, to have a practical value, as well as a merely antiquarian interest. The last man who did any political work of European importance by the use of satire—Béranger—felt strongly on this subject. He had been often urged to come forward for the Academy, but always persistently declined ; and he gave a remarkable explanation of his reasons for this decision. The *chanson*, he said, may be again needed as a political instrument ; and I could not, as a *chansonnier*, set an example which might lead to its being prostituted by ambitious men to the service of power. The sentiment is noble ; and it is instructive. Satire may again be necessary in politics and other fields ; and if the reaction against modern knowledge and thought, which seems to be gaining ground in some quarters, should become really formidable to intellectual freedom, we may some of us be none the less useful for having studied the satirical masters of the great sixteenth century.

By the Sea-Side in South-East Africa.

ALONG the whole Natal coast-line there is, so far as I know, but one spot which can fairly be called a watering-place. To that length of south-east African shore might also be added two hundred miles to the south, and two hundred miles to the north of our colonial frontiers, and then we shall have nearly six hundred miles of glorious sea-frontage utterly unused for purposes of enjoyment by man. The sole rival of Brighton or Biarritz in this part of the world is the place I refer to. A smaller can hardly exist, for it contains only one house. And even that house would, in the eyes of all my English readers, be deemed little better than a hovel. Such as it is, I am its tenant for the time being, and a vast fund of true and healthful enjoyment does the tenancy of my hovel confer upon me.

Few shores can present less variety of outline than that of South-East Africa. No navigable rivers empty themselves into the sea; thus there are no estuaries. Scores of narrow, rocky, shallow streams do fall into the ocean, after devious courses from the ever-visible uplands, but all of them have sand-bars across their mouths, and during the dry mid-year months of winter these bars can often be traversed dryshod. Nor are there any creeks, harbours, or indentations of any kind, except where, here and there, some river-guarding bluff advances a little further than usual into the sea, and thus affords, on one side at least, a small measure of shelter. Between Delagoa Bay on the north, and Algoa Bay on the south—and there are, say, seven hundred miles between them—only one port worth the name is found, and that is Durban, the leading commercial centre of Natal. There an all but landlocked basin, about five miles long, affords a safe haven for vessels of moderate tonnage.

My watering-place, which is what I have to do with now, is about fifteen miles south of Durban. Africa is but a beginner in civilization as yet; and although six miles of railway are in operation near the town, they do not come in this direction. Nor, indeed, do public vehicles of any kind offer facilities for travel. In Natal, when we want to go about, but one way is possible to those who are burdened with baggage or other *impedimenta*. We have to post to our watering-place. But our chariot is a clumsy, big, and springless waggon, and our team consists of fourteen gigantic oxen, whose vast-spreading horns never fail to strike the stranger with surprise. This cumbrous vehicle is as slow as it is uncomfortable. Moving at the rate of about two miles an hour, we hope to reach our destination ere dusk. The road, though flat, is sandy. Long hills, shaggy with tropical bush-growth, and enlivened by the gardens and

cottages of suburban residents, skirt our way. On the other side the mangrove swamp, which lines the bay, hems us in. Groups of Kaffirs and coolies, laden with fruit and vegetables for sale in town, pass us. Solitary horsemen, devoid of knightly trappings, are seen ambling along such sylvan and shady by-paths as Mr. G. P. R. James would have delighted in. Here we plunge through a narrow, bridgeless stream, where, at high tide, the oxen might have to swim. Here we come to a tree of untold antiquity, under whose spreading branches many a picnic party has disported, and many a belated traveller encamped for the night. After three hours' "trekking," or crawling, the panting oxen are set free, to depasture themselves for an hour or two. No inn is near; but waggon travellers eschew hotel accommodation, being, of all classes of wayfarers, the most self-reliant. Brushwood is gathered in the neighbouring bush by our attendant Kaffirs, a fire is lit, the kettle is boiled, and, seated on the ground, our party take their midday meal.

A few words about that party may not be out of place. I am the only man amongst them—a fact portending serious responsibilities. The costume of my fair fellow-travellers would give a serious shock to the proprieties of Scarborough or Deauville. Hats that are nearly two feet in diameter shield the feminine visages from the scorching sun. Crinoline was never in less demand. At my watering-place the utility of apparel is estimated according to its age and strength. The total absence of all curious eyes enables the laws of Nature and the dictates of comfort to be consistently followed.

In the month of May with us the shadows begin to lengthen early, and our journey's end draws near. After crossing the Umlazi by a wooden bridge, we pass sugar-mills in quick succession. For this long, narrow plain, stretching out from the head of the bay, is almost covered with plantations, whose thick, ribbon-like leaves make a cheery rustle as we pass them. The chessboard-like divisions of coffee-estates may also be seen on the wooded hillsides. A little further and we cross a wide, shallow stream, in the quicksands of whose bottom waggons often stick for hours, and which is sometimes so flooded in the summer as to be impassable by horsemen. Now we leave all traces of a road behind us, and follow the bed of the river for half a mile or more, until a narrow path, cut out of the side of a steep hill, shows us that our seaside retreat has at last been reached.

I have ridden on ahead, meanwhile, to "prospect" the place, and see how we could get into the house; for when too late to return to Durban it is discovered that the one key which serves for all the doors has been left behind. A narrow path cut out of the side of a steep hill, rising at an angle of about forty-five degrees, brings me to an opening of the bush on the top of a shoulder of the hill, about a hundred feet above the plain. Just through this, in a small shelf-like nook, surrounded on three sides by bush, stands our home for the ensuing month. My enthusiasm about the attractions of the spot somewhat abated when I saw our residence. It

is a small building of a construction peculiar to South Africa, and known locally as "wattle and dab." Its walls are simply made of poles, with wattles interlaced between them, the whole being daubed over with rough plaster, and then limewashed. In an inclement climate, where the winds are violent and rains are frequent, such a style of architecture would never keep out the weather. But in our mild latitude it gives capital shelter and lasts for many a long year. In this case the structure consists of one centre room, twenty feet long and fourteen wide, into which open four small rooms, two on either side, each being respectively fourteen by eight. The first serves us as parlour, dining-room, reception-room, and room of all-work, the others are all bedrooms. Overhead there is nothing but the bare sheets of iron that form the roof. As the walls are only about ten feet high, and whitewashed inside as well as out, the reader will form some idea of the charming simplicity which distinguishes this, our marine *ménage*.

Locks in Natal are superfluities. Until within the last year burglars and robbers were never heard of except as plaguing foreign lands. As often as not in our country districts doors are left unlocked, windows unfastened, and our houses generally accessible to any evil-disposed persons. Our primitive state hitherto has been our great security. As civilization grows and spreads all this will pass away; and there are such evidences latterly, that, as a colony, we are civilizing and degenerating concurrently. This is by way of explaining how it was that I managed so readily, with the aid of a large nail, to force open the lock, and thus obtain ingress. Although no other house is to be found at a less distance than a mile the lock was a formality—a deference to usage and nothing more.

The sun was setting as the waggon drew up for the night at the bottom, and weary work we had dragging all our household goods up that ladder-like path before darkness set in. Although the house was let as "furnished" we had a host of moveables to bring with us, the furniture being simply confined to a table, two closets, one large and four small bedsteads, some shelves, a cracked toilet glass, and a dozen chairs. It required some exertion, therefore, to put our house in order and appease our hunger, but both were duly accomplished within two or three hours. Our Kaffirs picked up a large pile of drift-wood from the beach in a few minutes, and soon a roaring fire filled our bare and curtainless apartment with a blaze of light.

Once shaken down into something like order, the everlasting boom of the breakers tempts me out. From the verandah in front I can see nothing but the vast, mystic blank of the ocean, stretching from my feet away into dim obscurity, and streaked along the shore, as far as the eye can penetrate the gloom, with white latherly bars of foam. Every few seconds, as some new roller rises darkly out of the sea, and plunges down upon the rocks in a crashing cataract of surge, a strange flash

of veiled phosphorescent light shoots along the breaker, as though some sudden blaze had burst out beneath it. This effect is quite different from the more sparkling displays of ocean phosphorescence one sees on a smaller scale when on the water at night. Only once have I seen anything like it, and that was off the coast of South America, one dark night when the ocean was crossed by broad bands of the same sort of light, emitted as we afterwards found, by a large species of jelly-fish, whose scientific denomination I am not naturalist enough to remember correctly.

Although I have been accustomed all my life to live near the sea, the constant roar of the waves only some hundred feet below produces at first an unpleasant and irritating sensation. On this first night I said that the din would certainly drive me mad if I continued there; but next night the noise was as great, and my reason seemed unimpaired; the night after that I concluded that the ocean might rave far more loudly than it did without affecting my sanity. The sea, indeed, became companionable in its vocal efforts before many days were over. Those grand tones, so unquenchably impressive, are, after all, the most eloquent of Nature's voices. For four weeks they have never ceased, and when, in the calmest weather, their fury abates, they only sink into a milder cadence. At night we have never got rid of the notion that a storm is raging. We wake, and fancy that rain is pouring down in torrents, and that a gale is howling round the house. Nothing of the sort. Go out, and the air is deliciously still, the stars shine peacefully, and all the elements are hushed except the sleepless ocean.

About seven in the morning the red dull blaze of the sun as it rises above the sea-line and looks in at our curtainless windows (there are no prying eyes to fear) wakes us all. From my pillow I look down upon the broad sea now, and usually at this time in a state of oily calm. No horizon is clearly visible in the mists of morning. It is not here as it is at sea, where the early riser enjoys the grandest aspect of the changeful ocean. The sea looks its worst at this time. Except on rare occasions when gales arise, these southern winter mornings are still, and the waves that may have tossed and tumbled in the sunlight of the preceding evening have generally subsided ere midnight. Thick vapours hang over the waters and contract the distance, the sun rises red and big, the sea looks torpid and dull; but it is not silent. Loud as ever roar the crashing breakers; and if the tide be flowing in, the din they make will be your first disturbance on awaking.

Short time does one take in dressing at so primitive a retreat. Having loosed the bit of string by which the door is temporarily fastened, I begin to do what all masters of South African households are compelled to do, namely, to set the wheels of the domestic machinery, in the shape of Kaffir and coolie servants, at work. The easy natures of these people forbid any exertion on their part that is not absolutely necessary. There they are, seated round the old grate in the reed hut, windowless, door-

less, and floorless, which acts as kitchen and servants' quarters to the establishment. A large pot of maize porridge gurgles pleasantly on the fire, and their simple hearts are rejoicing in the prospect of a speedy meal. Happily, they are a docile, albeit a lazy, people, and they skip about their several duties with a song on their lips and a smile in their eyes. Not so, however, our Indian cook. He is in great straits. He can't keep the draughts out of the kitchen, and he is distressed by the utter lack of all facilities for cooking. He mutters that he can't understand why his master should desert home comforts for such a place. Nature has few charms for Sambo anywhere; to love her is to acquire a taste. My cook falls into a yet lower state of despondency on finding that both teapot and coffee-pot have been forgotten, and with a sigh he proceeds to make an earthenware pitcher without a handle do duty for those utensils, as well as, at a later stage, act as deputy for a soup tureen.

The order of the day at our watering-place is about as regular and systematic as it is at more pretentious resorts. Breakfast being over, down all the party sallies to the beach. That is the beginning and the end of our enjoyments; the shore in one phase or another engrosses all our attention. Now the tide happens to be out. Smooth and hard the sands stretch bare on either hand. Beyond them the dark rocks are left uncovered by the falling tide. An almost perpendicular bound of about a hundred feet carries us to the top of a pile of boulders, by which the beach just here is buttressed. Below these, on one side a platform of rock stretches out to the sea. This slab of sandstone is worn into numberless little basins and channels, in which lovely striped fish of tiny size and delicate proportions flit about. Further on, the pools are deeper and larger; the rocks are undermined by the sea, which you can hear champing and chafing beneath you. Now and then, an incoming wave fills these pools to overflowing, and through countless unsuspected holes and chinks the water spurts up like a fountain into your face. To the further rocks the mussels cling in black masses, tons on tons, small and great, from the delicate green-tinted youngster to the big, hoary, and bearded patriarch.

It is here that we fish. On the first morning of our arrival a Kaffir put his hook down a deep hole not more than a foot in diameter, and in a minute's time he hauled up a huge rock-cod, dark-brown and spotted, with broad greedy mouth, and ugly fins. These insignificant-looking pools, crannies though they be, give access to the still depths of sea underneath, where these fish, which are delicious eating, love to lie. But there are fish of all kinds to be had for the hauling. Come to this rock—a daily haunt of ours. Down in the clear depths you may see hundreds of beautiful creatures—some darting quickly from rock to rock, and pool to pool, others gliding slowly nearer the bottom, now poking at a bunch of seaweed, or putting to flight a shoal of smaller fry. Here are

the narrow, deep-bodied, silvery bream ; the codlike, broad-backed mullet ; the deep, fleshy-coloured, Cape salmon. Here, too, are fish, flashing to and fro, which in truth may be said to " bear the rich hues of all glorious things." I have seen the fish-markets of Mauritius and other Eastern places, but never have I seen fish so brilliantly and beautifully coloured as some that are common here. Two kinds in particular may be named ; one being striped with jagged bands of the brightest blue and orange ; the other being crossed by bars of the richest green and gold. Both are good biters and capital eating, and as they retain their colours after cooking, they are pleasant objects on the table.

But there are ugly fellows too. One little wretch in particular, from his extreme and unparalleled hideousness, we dubbed a sea-devil. In all respects he is hateful. This pariah of the fish race is cowardly but greedy, never swimming forth into the open water, but crouching in holes of the rock, or among the seaweed, not far from the surface. He has a detestable knack of seizing the bait when it gets within reach, and holding it tenaciously while you tug and tug in the belief that the hook has caught. The first fish of this kind which I brought up offered so much resistance that I reckoned upon a prize of magnificent proportions, and was rewarded by a wriggling, uncanny creature three or four inches long. This toad of the ocean is dark-brown and mottled, is scaleless, and protrudes large vicious eyes. Its mouth is far too large for its body, and overhung by masses of fleshy skin not unlike lips. Two large prickly fins, just like the wings of harpies, are placed close to the head, and a long row of similar ones runs down the back. Small yellow teeth, which have a proneness to bite, complete the picture.

But the most companionable and interesting fishes we have here are the porpoises. They are our daily visitors. A school of about a hundred appear to have their abiding place somewhere along the coast. Shortly after sunrise they come plunging and leaping up from the southward, returning again ere the day be out. They are not the uncouth creatures they appear and are reputed to be. We have excellent opportunities of observation, as these lively creatures keep close inshore, just outside the rocks, but within and amongst the breakers, which have no terrors for them. It is a rare sight to see a troop of porpoises coming head on towards the land on the crest of a roller. When caught by such a wave they turn with it, and as the great heave of water gathers itself up, wall-like, and then curls over and darts down, smooth, green, and crushing, the line of porpoises may be clearly seen, at full length, regular as a squadron of cavalry, diving or rather rushing with the force of the wave into the stiller depths beneath the swirling foam.

Pleasant is it, too, to watch the porpoises leap, as I often have seen them do, clear over a breaker, or turn head over tail in their gambols, or catch at some roving fish, for which they are ever looking out. Sad havoc, indeed, do these voracious creatures make among their smaller

fellows, and a morning when no porpoises appear—a rare event—is a certain prelude to good sport.

At spring-tides, when the far-receding waves leave the rocks bare, a perfect paradise of seaside "wonders" is disclosed. The first day when we could get such a glimpse of the beauties which the sea hides happened to be Sunday, and our party were, I believe, none the worse for being compelled to wander in rapturous admiration, not amidst the fretted aisles of church or cathedral, but amidst these—the humblest, and yet the most mysterious, of Nature's works. The rocks were found to contain pool after pool, in bewildering numbers, each being in itself a most perfect and amply-furnished aquarium. Words cannot describe the purity of the water in these wave-worn cavities, but it will be understood perhaps when I say that on more than one occasion I have got a wetting by walking into one, under the delusion that it was dry. These pools are sometimes carpeted with sea-weed of vivid tints, with sponges, with fungi, or perhaps with sparkling and shell-strewn sand. All round the sides is a shaggy growth of sea-weed, while under tiny overhanging cliffs sea anemones nestle, or the starlike species of the sea urchin move curiously about. Multitudes of delicate and graceful little fish, with silvery, striped, golden, or speckled bodies, glide peacefully hither and thither, or, when disturbed, dart into some smaller out-pool—a sort of inner chamber, where the sea-weed grows thicker, the rock overhangs more, and a comfortable hiding-place can be found. The beautiful shells we pick up on the sands above are here seen animated, moving about the bottom, and taking an active part in the wonderful economy of the universe.

But time would fail me were I to write of these sub-aqueous glories as I should like to do. Their types and forms are so varied and new, their habits are so interesting and suggestive, their colours are so rich and mellow, and they, in their native loveliness, seem so confidently to defy the power of man to imitate or to match their beauties, that one could never tire of trying to do justice to such a theme. But there are other features of our watering-place yet to be described ere this rapid sketch ends. Not far up the coast the sea has scooped out of a mass of sandstone rocks three or four picturesque arches and caves, not large, but infinitely beautiful, as the afternoon sun glints through their chinks and crannies, and throws a glow upon the big boulders piled up in the background. Half-a-mile further we come to a little bay, hemmed in by tall rocks, but skirted by a delicious strip of hard firm sand. Behind and around rises, sheer from the water's edge to the height of 300 feet, an almost perpendicular hill, clothed with thick vegetation—rustling bananas, spiral aloes, and hanging creepers, whose evergreen tints are reflected, when the tide is up and the air is calm, in the waters below.

The vegetation of our shores would seem strange even to eyes accus-

tomed to the leafage and bush-growth of southern Europe. All along the beach, just above high water mark, are rows of tall grim aloes, a plant whose leaves are as large as, though their arrangement differs from, those of the Mexican agave. These veterans rise in some places to a height of twenty feet. Around their stems cluster thickly the dead leaves of many long seasons, and at the top the fresh living leaves spread out umbrella-wise. Standing thus, they look like gaunt sentries stationed along the beach. They are scattered singly amidst the bush, clothing the hills, steep and high, that rise abruptly from the sands along the whole length of the Natal coast. But dense groves of the wild banana, and closely-matted jungle of stunted growth, give freshness throughout the year to the aspect of the shore.

Not many birds are to be seen hereabout. Occasionally a gull will fly over the sea to some unseen resting place. Now and then that toothsome delicacy, the "Oddidore," will alight on the beach in quest of insects or crabs. About ten miles to the southward a stream called in the expressive language of the natives, Amanzimtote, or River of Sweet Water, enters the sea. Near the mouth it spreads out, as many of our African rivers do, into a lagoon, surrounded by bushy hills, whose environing trees spring nearly out of the water. Here these beautiful birds may be found in large numbers, for in this sequestered retreat few sportsmen, as yet, have found them out. At the mouth of our river, the Ümbogontwini, there are several large boulders overlooking the stream, and on the top of these a pair of speckled kingfishers, the largest and rarest of that beautiful species, are often distinctly perched. We have seen, too, more than one flock of pelicans pass over us, their number being preceded, as usual, by a leader, and their harsh cries distinctly reaching us from a vast altitude. Black-winged, white-headed sea-eagles sometimes, though not often, sail past majestically, while silver-winged snipe may be met with on the beach in the early morning. The bush at the back of us is thronged with smaller birds, emerald-winged, golden-breasted, scarlet-collared, or black-crested, and by no means destitute of vocal capacity.

There are other forms of life about us of which the reader may like to hear something. Our house is situated in the corner of what is known as a Kaffir location. The cautious foresight of the English government has set apart for, and the liberality of the colonial legislature has secured to, the mass of Kaffirs, refugees, and others, living within the colony, certain large spaces of land, comprising in all about a million and a half acres, which are inalienably assigned for their occupation and benefit. All the country southward of us for twenty miles is one of these locations. Some of the natives resident in it are among the oldest coloured inhabitants of the colony. Of late years the location has become partly depopulated, owing to that instinct, or necessity, of savage races which leads them to retire before the advances of civilization. This location consists of some of the finest land on the coast. It is close to town, and therefore near a market.

Many a white settler would be only too thankful to have a home here. But its very proximity to the more thickly colonized districts constitutes its chief drawback in the eyes of the natives. They begin to feel cramped and overlooked ; and latterly many large tribes have, for no other apparent reason, moved away nearly a hundred miles to the southward, near the frontier of the colony. The consequence is that this beautiful tract of country is scarcely peopled at all, and it is hoped that the home government will allow it to be exchanged for the lands voluntarily selected by its former inhabitants.

But there are many Kaffirs residing here nevertheless. Two kraals are in the immediate neighbourhood, and as we are largely dependent upon them for our daily supplies, they are regarded as part of our establishment. Butcheries and shops are at some distance, and fish forms a large feature in one's daily *menu*. These black neighbours of ours are simple, primitive people, who regard this rough and rude shanty as a sort of manor-house, from whence they have a prescriptive right to draw as much custom as possible. We had not been here two days before the head and lord of the nearest kraal came to pay his respects. He was a tall, fine old man, of about sixty-five, as far as one could judge, and a Kaffir's age is one of those mysteries which baffle the sharpest intelligence and the most prolonged observation. He was in the garb of his people, that is the garb of nature, wholly unassisted save in the girdle of skin and a feather or two stuck in his hair. A young wife accompanied him, apparently regarding her patriarchal husband as an excellent joke. Having squatted on his knees in the verandah he began to take snuff, as a preface to further diplomatic intercourse, and then proceeded with inflexible candour to express his opinion regarding the personal appearance of every member of our party, to the great confusion of all. Having asked for a drink, and obtained it, he gave the best part of the beverage to his young wife, who told him that it would certainly do him harm were he to imbibe it all. Having then arranged to supply us with milk and corn daily, he saluted us as his rulers and benefactors, and went his way. The next morning the head of another kraal, about two miles off, came to see us, bringing with him baskets containing noble fish, large active crayfish, oysters and mussels, for all of which excellent prices were demanded. It is a singular circumstance that while Zulus generally will not touch fish, looking upon it as well as upon pork as unclean, these Kaffirs have no such scruples, and almost subsist on fish. The children come down in shoals, pick a quantity of mussels off the rocks, light a fire upon the beach, and roast them over it ; and capital eating they are when thus cooked. More expert fishermen than the Kaffirs are I have rarely seen. Their lines are of great strength, twisted out of strips of bark. Baiting these with crayfish they will pull out of small holes, with surprising quickness, fish after fish—great struggling fellows which require a hard blow or two before they are got off the line.

The other day we made a state visit to the nearest kraal. After following some winding paths, darkened by the overhanging bush, we came to a group of about half-a-dozen beehive-shaped huts placed round an enclosure for cattle, at the top of a hill. A chorus of many dogs greeted our approach. Curs, of no breed in particular, always infest the kraals of Kaffirs, and bark much without biting at all. Several women crawled out of the apertures, two feet high, through which alone daylight finds ingress into these straw huts. Presently the whole seraglio was around us, and in due time the old chief himself toddled up from a midday siesta under a leafy tree. It was pleasant to see how thoroughly fond and fearless of him his wives seemed to be. There were six of them, one for each hut. All had babies of tender age on their backs or in their arms. He was no Bluebeard, this aged polygamist, and fondled his youngest infant—a bead-eyed little urchin wholly naked, as all Kaffir children are—with more manifest affection than I ever saw a native exhibit before. Presently a woman much older than the rest came up and squatted down on all fours beside him, as though the place were hers by right. He looked pleased to see her. She put her head down, very much as a cat does when it wants stroking, and he fondly rubbed and scratched it for a while. The action was so simple, yet so funny, that we could not resist a laugh. He looked up rather wonderingly and asked us if we were smiling at his doing that. “You white men have particular ways of caressing those you love, and this is our way.” The justice of this remark we had to admit, whether we liked it or not; and though the lesson came unpleasantly, we confessed to ourselves that the self-sufficiency of people who ridicule others for habits and customs that differ from their own, often deserve such a rebuke as we received from this Zulu philosopher. The old lady herself was evidently delighted with the attention of her husband, and proudly told us that she was his oldest wife. “And I love her the best,” said he, an assurance by no means resented by the others.

This reminds me of a story told by a medical friend, who many years resided in the upper districts. The wife of a powerful chief living in the vicinity was bitten by a snake, and in his anxiety to cure her the chief at once sent for the European doctor. Some considerable time necessarily elapsed before the latter could possibly reach the place, and his arrival was too late to effect a cure; the wife died. The chief was wildly inconsolable. “But you have plenty more wives,” suggested my friend, anxious to cheer the painful distress of the bereaved chieftain, who could number his wives by tens, if not by twenties. “Ah,” said he, with an expression of real and deep feeling, “but the heart loves but one.”

Before we left the kraal a fine young man, himself married, came up. “That is my eldest son,” said the old wife, “and the best of them all.” The heir, despite his importance and superiority, seemed a modest, unassuming fellow. When his father dies, he will inherit not only his station and property, but his wives too, who will then be his slaves, and

bound to work for him, as they now are for his parent. This is one of the provisions of Kafir law, which it is an anomaly of our social condition to have in operation here.

Small things please these simple-minded people. The girls of our party had brought several strips of coloured rags, and these were accepted with boundless gratitude by the women, who forthwith began bedecking the brows, the arms, and the person of their lord and master with them, reserving only one bit apiece for themselves. The old man was as proud of these decorations as a gartered knight may be with his ribbon, and the whole party at once burst into a jubilant chorus, keeping time with their hands and shoulders. Vanity is no less a foible with Kaffirs than with Europeans. Not long since a party of the girls at this kraal came to see us, each having a baby strapped to her back. Happening to catch a glimpse of a swing looking-glass of fair size, an object they had never seen before, their delight was most extravagant and vociferous. Screams of astonishment and admiration filled the room. Huddling up together so that all might get a glimpse of themselves in the mirror, they began dancing, singing, and rolling their eyes and heads about after a fashion known only to such barbarians. Since that time they have brought fish and wild-fruit as bribes for permission to gaze into and dance before the magic mirror.

But I must stop, for my pen is running away with me. There are other aspects of our watering-place as novel, if not as interesting, as those I have described. Much might be said of the luxury of bathing as we have it here, with no prying eyes to care for, and the rock-bound but turbulent breakers to bound amongst. To be knocked about by these waves, lifted off your feet by an advancing breaker, and tossed up high, if not dry, upon the sands, to be scrubbed by the coarse clean sand, or whirled amidst the lather of some seething "cross-jobble," is to enjoy sea-bathing in its best and truest form. Then, when you have had enough of the salt water, a dozen paces across the river-bar takes you to the shallow stream, where you can have a cool fresh bath, and feel in all respects renovated. This last facility to my mind makes our bathing perfection.

Or go to the top of that little hill near the cottage, crowned by a flag-staff, and see what a glorious prospect spreads out inland. At our feet stretches northward a long narrow plain, green with nestling cane leaves, and humanized by many sugar-mills. All round it rise bold hills, dark with the primeval bush which covers all our coast lands. On the other side the valley winds westward, disclosing an ever-undulating woodland country, rising and sinking in pleasant continuity of softest vallies, where babbling brooks or sleepy rivers are flowing; while further yet the rolling uplands dilate in huge swelling heights, here and there rent by some sudden chasm, but following each other in their upward march to our mountain frontier, like the rolling billows of the sea.

And back to that sea our eye instinctively turns, for it fills more than half the horizon, and unquestionably predominates. It is in one sense a strangely silent sea ; rarely, indeed, is a sail seen upon it. During our month of residence we have seen but four steamers and three sailing vessels. Coleridge might fitly have written here :—

Alone, alone,—all, all alone ;
Alone on a wide, wide sea.

A wide sea truly. The crested waves that come trooping up in serried order may have travelled, for aught I know, from that mysterious antarctic land investing the south pole yonder ; there is naught to stop their march betwixt this shore and that far-off strand. They are the pure, deep ocean ; they are in no degree of the earth, earthy. Unlike the waters of the German Ocean or the British Channel, they are the true *aqua pura* of the sea gods. Agencies invisible to us, operating at remote distances, gales and storms of which we are insensible, move them. In the calmest weather they break and roar incessantly, and there are few ears to hear them. Commerce has yet to stretch her wings this way, and to make these waters lively with the presence of ships and steamers. When the avenues of human industry in the northern world are filled to overflowing, then we may hope to see this sea lit with many a white sail, and all the latent goodness of the land developed ; and may that day be nigh.
